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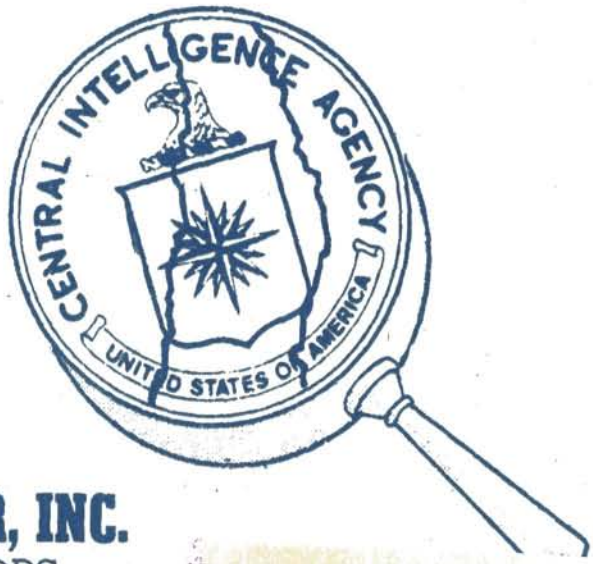
commonweal

THE POLITICS OF ASSASSINATION

W. CAREY McWILLIAMS



MURDER, INC.

THE EDITORS

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ABIGAIL McCARTHY — **OF THEE, NEVERTHELESS, I SING**
GARY MacEOIN — **CHILE'S SILENT CHURCH**
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NEWS & VIEWS

Drawn and Quarterly

Making its final appearance with its current special issue on China is the *Holy Cross Quarterly*, a victim to finances and the one-man-management syndrome.

Father William Van Etten Casey, S.J., who built the *Quarterly* into a colorful and scholarly publication (proving once again that these qualities need not be mutually exclusive), has resigned for reasons of health. There will be no successor.

For one thing, there is no heir apparent to Casey. Besides, the college is anxious to economize, and the *Quarterly* thus is a handy savings' instrument. It regularly exceeds its $20,000 budget (the printing bill alone for the China issue is $38,000), and rubs some alumni the wrong way, to boot. Folding it means money in the bank from a couple of directions.

So the *Holy Cross Quarterly* goes the way of *Continuum* and the *Columbia Forum*, proud publications that projected precisely the image a campus publication should of a college and its concerns.

The *Holy Cross Quarterly* wasn't as famous as the other two. It was around only eight years—but they were spectacular publishing years, as the *Quarterly* tackled topics ranging from the troubles in Ireland to town-and-gown relationships in Worcester.

The publishing high point, of course, was its Berrigan issue, which had a press run of over 40,000 (double the *Quarterly*'s normal figure), went into a German edition, and was converted into a paperback book with a printing of 50,000. (The *Quarterly*'s primary audience is Holy Cross' 21,000 alumni, who receive it free.)

The Berrigan issue brought the wrath of many alumni down on Father John E. Brooks, S.J., college president, and for a time alumni contributions dipped. Brooks remained very supportive of Casey and the *Quarterly* throughout the years, and the decision to let the journal die is less his than it is some clerical pencil-pushers' in the college's administration offices.

That might assign onus, but it doesn't diminish the loss. The *Quarterly* was perhaps the best thing to emanate from Holy Cross since Michael Harrington and Phil Berrigan took their degrees.

For whatever consolation it may be to Casey and his partisans, the *Quarterly* goes out with a bang rather than a whimper. The China issue is the most ambitious of its history, and the most intellectually prepossessing. Casey has put together a important library item, featured by some provocative first-hand observations of his own from a 1973-74 trip to China. (The 160-page issue, profusely illustrated, is available for $4 from the *Quarterly* office, Holy Cross College, Worcester, Mass., 01610.)

Anti-Abortion Front

Trouble in the anti-abortion camp: the founder of Birthright, a movement for providing alternatives to women seeking abortion, is taking legal action against a dozen U.S. Catholic diocesan agencies which have adopted the Birthright name and set up "illegal" chapters.

Mrs. Louise Summerhill of Toronto charged Catholic chancery offices and charities' organizations in the U.S. with being the "greatest obstacles" to the movement.

"Each year, hundreds of girls, many of them non-Catholics, are afraid to seek help from Birthright because of these illegal chapters being operated out of diocesan offices," Mrs. Summerhill told a Birthright convention in Toronto.

Mrs. Summerhill, a Catholic who founded Birthright in 1968, has criticized Cardinal Cooke of New York and the New York Birthright office for giving the movement a "Catholic image." In 1972, she said identification of Birthright and the Catholic Church would result in some women deciding not to seek its services and Protestant churches deciding not to offer support.

She told the Toronto convention that Birthright must keep its identity and stay out of the contraception controversy and any other political activity.

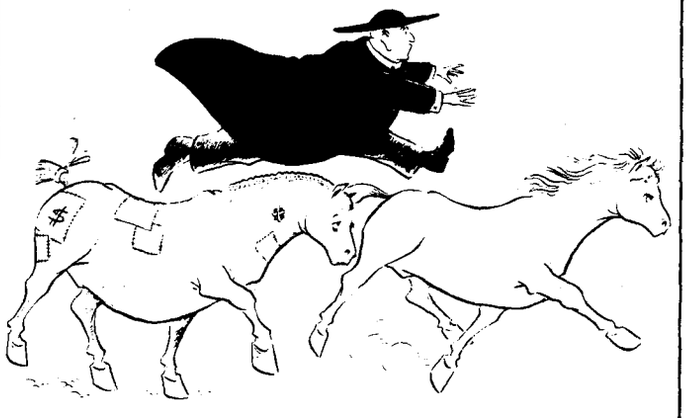
"My hope in the beginning of Birthright was that this would become a truly ecumenical movement," she declared. "In a way, it is, but the problem is that there are still too few Protestant churches involved."

A.M.D.G.

In Ocean City, Md., millionaire businessman Victor Frenkil opened his new $20 million, 24-story high-rise Golden Sands Club, which he calls the "Cadillac" of the new condominiums.

Charter planes shuttled guests from Baltimore-Washington International Airport, as part of a $750,000 promotional effort. There were food, drink, music, and a Jesuit from Loyola College in Baltimore, Father Daniel McGuire, who effused as he blessed Golden Sands:

"This is not just a condominium. It is a tower of human glory . . . an everlasting memorial to innovative organization—a consecration to free enterprise."



Vadillo, *Siempre*, Mexico

A Clarification

On June 20 I wrote of quickened humanitarian concern about the fate of illegal aliens in the United States, and I linked this to a sensitizing resulting from the influx of the Vietnamese refugees.

The observations have been read as a reflection on the individuals cited in the column and on the U.S. Catholic Conference, which has long fought the good fight in behalf of aliens, notably through officials such as Msgr. George G. Higgins.

The remarks were not so intended. They were meant, instead, to reflect on certain agencies of government, particularly the Department of Immigration, and on those who have cooperated with the department in its witch-hunts on aliens (such as the unnamed archdiocese of the item). I regret the ambiguity.

Incidentally, since the item appeared, a delegation of Catholic bishops met with President Ford at the White House and urged amnesty for illegal aliens in the country. They asked that a particular effort be made to keep families intact, and stressed that by regularizing the alien situation, the problems inherent in people living in hiding—such as crime, welfare needs and inhumane conditions for families—can be alleviated.

The hearing was cordial. Now to see what happens.

JOHN DEEDY

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CORRESPONDENCE

Kung, Rahner, Rome

Chicago, Ill.

To the Editors: In Adolph Schalk's characteristically balanced and sensible article about Hans Küng [May 23] there was a phrase about which I would like to raise some objection. He refers to Karl Rahner as "Küng's close friend and mentor." Both terms, of course, admit of different meanings, but Rahner was never Küng's teacher, and I would be at a loss to think of any way in which he has been Küng's mentor. Furthermore, anyone who has read Rahner's criticism of Küng or has observed the deep resentment that he unaccountably feels for the younger theologian would be forced to observe that with a friend like Rahner, Küng doesn't need enemies.

(REV.) ANDREW M. GREELEY

Los Angeles, Calif.

To the Editors: Adolph Schalk's article on Küng's "Brush with Rome" in your May 23, 1975, issue, has within it the too easy journalism which negates theology.

I could agree with statements which precisely discuss misuse of church authority. And I could agree with studies which show errors in church teaching, apart from the essence of my faith. But I find it difficult to accept an article which has an implied premise of a very broad definition of infallibility in order to knock down a straw horse. The definition of papal infallibility in Vatican I was very limited. Schalk takes a broad negative position, stating Küng's position as "no papal pronouncement is totally free from the possibility of error . . ." and put positively, apparently makes it his own position that every church teaching is subject to error.

The example that Schalk uses to prove his point makes a logical jump, excellent for journalistic purposes, but a poor tactic for dialogue in theology. The example is: "But throughout the

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Perhaps the most astonishing aspect of the story alleging CIA involvement in plots to assassinate political leaders in countries whose policies ostensibly offended the United States is its inability, not so much as to dominate public consciousness in the fashion, say, of the Watergate story, as even to significantly impress it. Here one has an official agency of the United States government, with or without the blessing of whoever happened to be President at the time, going about the business of murder—not in the circumstance of a formally declared, full-scale war, when a rationale might be developed for the action, but in peacetime, when no formal state of belligerency exists, and when, presumably, there are avenues such as diplomacy and international forums for effecting change. It is an appalling, disgraceful business, one which, if substantiated, testifies to a national political and moral impoverishment. Yet this story has to battle for attention. It is almost as though a mass conspiracy were at work, at the grassroots and at the highest levels of government, either to contain the story or block it out of the psyche.

It is easier to understand these repressions than it is to excuse them. Murder—which is what assassination is, in its bluntest term—is a reprehensible act, and no one likes to conceive of its being an instrument of our government's foreign policy. The very thought does violence to whatever ideals happen to survive of American diplomatic purity and integrity. Add murder to the narrative of American foreign interference that has recently unfolded, and this country drops below the bottom level of decencies that are expected to exist between nations.

And this is precisely where the United States is if reports are true of American complicity in the assassinations of the Dominican Republic's Trujillo and the Congo's Lumumba, and in unsuccessful efforts on the life of Cuba's Fidel Castro. No amount of rationalization or of pragmatic

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reasoning, such as cited by W. Carey McWilliams elsewhere in this issue, can obviate the fact that murder is evil and unacceptable as an instrument of national policy, even in the most limited of circumstances and under whatever Orwellian felicity of vocabulary. To have matters otherwise is to wipe out last standards of international morality and introduce the law of the jungle to affairs between nations. For if assassination is a defendable tool for the United States, it is for any other nation, and the world is mired in a sickening perversity.

Under the circumstances, it is understandable that the Ford administration should seek to "low-profile" the CIA-assassinations story (except, it sometimes appears, as this story might be useful in reflecting on the Kennedy family image). The CIA story, if true in only a tangential way, is a national disgrace. If fully substantiated, it could indicate that we are sicker as a nation than was ever imagined in even the darkest days of Watergate.

Like the person with a terminal disease, it might be more comfortable not to talk about the ailment. But suppression of facts about CIA assassination involvements is not going to wipe out the past, nor is it likely to correct the future—pious truisms of Attorney General Levi notwithstanding, along with fresh resolves about the CIA never again being a government within a government, making determinations about who is to be murdered and who not. The cancer must be laid bare, even if it means radical surgery and permanent hurt to the CIA.

This is why it is important that the Congress dig to the bottom of the CIA mess. Unfortunately, the relevant House committee is bogged down by the injudiciousness of its chairman, Representative Lucien N. Nedzi. However, there is the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence headed by Senator Frank Church, and it is proceeding in spite of White House and bureaucratic roadblocks. It is to be hoped that the persistence of the committee as a whole matches that of Mr. Church, for it is as true now as it was during Watergate: our country is never going to get well until we all know completely what's wrong with it. The challenge to the Church committee, in a word, is tied up with the very health of the nation.

WASHINGTON REPORT

A LIBERAL GEORGE WALLACE

The country needed a good five-cent cigar, someone said soothingly back in the days when the country was rattled by bad times. Fifty years or so later, the country is again rattled by bad times and a good five-cent cigar is still unavailable, or a good twenty-five-cent one for that matter. Well, no use crying over unspilt ashes. Actually, what would help the country more nowadays are political leaders who broadly understand what's bothering most Americans, regardless of race, creed, color or political persuasion. Leaders who speak shirt-sleeved English in a constructive fashion—to demonstrate that however much water is in our glass, the glass can be made fuller and not snidely suggest that our glass is being tapped by the inferior orders. Leaders who know the difference between a spade and a shovel, horse manure and cow manure, a horse chestnut and a chestnut horse, and day and night. And, in the doing, leaders who do not strum the aspirations of voters beyond attainment and are also willing to concede there are some things that can't be legislated or otherwise regulated into or out of being. Finally, someone who can not only tell it "like it is," as the reactionary George Wallace prides himself on doing, but also can tell it as it ought to be—and show the way.

Lest it occur to anyone that there are available such leaders who lead, not follow, it should be quickly noted that none of the candidates on the boards, or preening themselves in the wings, fits the casting requirements. Aging men, abiding by aged political scripts, demonstrate before us; youngish Hotspurs, speaking fashionably radical rhetoric, seek our recognition; among the others, aging and youngish alike, each plans to take his seat in the presidential nominating conventions next year in hopes his number will be drawn, if the more prominent falter. Furthermore, these men, seeking the prize, are being advised, assisted, counseled, prodded, poked and directed by hired help to whom the public opinion poll of the moment becomes a written tablet in stone, and the political TV "spot" and brochure and billboard become the political reality of the issues. Moses would not have led his people from Egypt, the Founding Fathers would not have gathered at Philadelphia, and Lincoln would not have taken the train to Gettysburg, had the Scammons and Wattenbergs been the counselors at-hand.

One may not subscribe to the specific programs of King and the two Kennedys and yet acknowledge their leaderships were of a constructive bent—persuading recalcitrant segments in America to accept, if grudgingly, the taking of those important second steps forward on behalf of the maltreated segments in America. This aspect of constructive leadership, although overlooked, is

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as important as that directly employed in helping the maltreated themselves. But these leaders are long gone —"executed," one may persuasively argue—and their replacements have not appeared. The Vietnam war and the Nixon drive toward dictatorship have further weakened any resolve for a stronger commonweal. More than seven-dozen new members entered the House of Representatives six months ago with a blaring of trumphets —and, today, they grope about in their assembly, overrun by successful presidential vetoes. Political institutions appear to offer less hope of redemption. Liberals, those who still band together, are somewhat demoralized. They are noticeably unable to deal effectively with two home- and hearth issues that are becoming more prominent. If sunnier political and economic climes prevailed, it would be possible for liberals to continue to get by with their flawed programs and pronouncements dealing with these two issues.

The issues are crime and school-busing as a vehicle to bring about public-school integration. Liberals are being overrun on these two issues. And, if this continues, the future for liberalism in America is not enhanced—prospects for achieving far-reaching reforms on broader issues enhanced no more.

Their legislative programs to reduce crime have floundered. Relatively better-off economically than most Americans and living in ghettos of their own, they've been unable to comprehend the fear generated in low-income ghettos the morning after the house-breaking next door or the holdup around the corner. They've taken easy refuge by both blaming poverty as a culprit—not the offender himself—and by reliance upon long-range societal "cures," the source of which reaffirms the Shavian dictum that those, who can, do and those, who can't, teach. Liberals have been inclined to treat calls for "law and order" as so much lawmen's shop talk. Liberals have been derelict, even negligent, in responding to increasing crime.

It is possible to affirm and propagate the First, Fourth, Fifth, Sixth and Eighth Amendments to the Constitution and yet insist on swift, sure punishment for the convicted. Nor does this preclude efforts to insist that prisons be tolerable, sentencing be procedurally sound, predictable, uniform and reviewable, the courts and law-enforcement offices properly staffed and organized so as to assure prompt disposal of cases between the time of arrest and trial—and that policemen treat all citizens fairly, including suspects.

In addition to slighting crime's victims, with the potentially sinister political consequences this ultimately may bring, liberals are on a slippery slope in talking about cures and remedies. If they would pay attention to the literature, they'd understand that penologists are pessimistic these days. Even eight years ago, the Martinson report, surveying a quarter-century of effort, concluded that no programs of rehabilitation anywhere have provided solid evidence that they are effective. The report suggests, for example, that a prison, by definition, exists to deprive a man of his freedom, that it simply cannot be an effective place of rehabilitation and, therefore, that prisons should be accepted without guilt as places to keep law-breakers away from the law-abiding public.

But there is no evidence in the prescriptive theme of penal legislation before the congressional committees that liberals are mending their ways. And demand, nourished by the political right, rises for a return to the whipping post and the gallows—demands that are being met in the states.

The general position of political liberals in the Congress is further breached by the "busing issue." Liberals, leaving the insulated atmosphere of Capitol Hill, drive home along the pretty parkways and tree-lined avenues of Washington to their middle-class ghettos—there to be greeted by their children enrolled in well-financed schools more often private than public ones. Once a week, they should resolve to drive home by another route—north on Seventh street and then left on R street, northwest, in order to gain a glimpse into the bleak, intermingled world of blacks and whites for whom they assert they are knowledgeably legislating. Along the way, they'd see the lousy schools, for which busing is no remedy, and crimes of violence openly committed on street-corners as if they were commonplace business transactions.

There is growing disenchantment among blacks as well as whites with (school) busing. The idea is to transport hitherto poorly educated black children to better financed schools, where enrollment is all or mostly white, and local school officials, their faces rubbed in the mess, would be obliged educationally to treat all pupils equally. It demonstrably hasn't worked out that way. White parents have either taken off to other parts of town, transferred their children to private schools, or taken to the streets as in South Boston.

Almost all liberals, more in the Senate than in the House, have kept pro-busing positions, although armchair strategists in the academic and school structures and, more importantly, some black civil-rights leaders themselves are now acknowledging the futility and divisiveness of busing and are suggesting that housing patterns, not school-enrollment patterns, should have been the object of change. But one prominent civil-rights leader, holding to busing, recently asked, almost pleaded with a national liberal Democrat, under pressure in his home-state to modify his position, not to change. Beginning this year, William Raspberry, a black columnist for the *Washington Post*, has begun to display his reservations and those of the black community about busing. The liberals' reluctance to change is more understanding on this issue than on the crime issue, because the dreams of black Americans are being deferred

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in so many ways, as Charles Hampden-Turner poignantly pointed out in a recent article in this magazine. And it is in Congress, most of all, that programs to benefit low-income Americans, black and white, are being placed on the back-burner.

A few liberals are beginning to support anti-busing legislation, although they find themselves in pretty gamy company in the persons of the Louise Day Hicks's of the Congress. Nevertheless, more and more black and white parents alike are telling their congressional representatives that they want most of all their Jacks and Jills to read, write and add and subtract and multiply. And, these parents continue, the closer to home their children learn these basic skills the better. A bus does not a schoolhouse make, these parents are saying, and there is growing dissatisfaction with the schoolhouses themselves, despite the $20-billion in federal funds spent on them in the last ten years. The Philadelphia regional office of the Federal Reserve Bank recently indicated in a report that 70 percent of those being graduated from high school in that metropolitan area can not read beyond an eighth-grade level.

Anti-busing legislation, including proposed amendments to the Constitution, is gaining support—even the patently unconstitutional ones, such as the Gurney amendment, which two years ago was supported by nearly one-half of the 100 Senators. Last month, Raspberry, the columnist, wrote: "Busing hasn't solved anything because busing can't solve anything but transportation problems. And transportation was never the issue." Equal distribution of education resources is the problem, he added, "instead of going after integration." Prof. James Coleman recently spoke up. He said that his 1966 study of school integration and equal educational opportunity was misused to justify massive school-busing programs for purposes of integration.

Political liberals had better shift on both issues, crime and busing, or risk further withering away of their appeal. Just as a man can be a liberal without being a spendthrift (it took Alf Landon to say this), so liberals can be "tough" on law-breakers, without being cast in a brown uniform, or oppose busing, without being cast in a white robe. However, few liberals have shown any desire to be the first to move. It may take a different kind of liberal to rescue liberals from themselves—someone other than an FDR or a Stevenson aristocratic liberal. Maybe, unattractive as it may appear at first mention, a "liberal George Wallace," blunt, unfashionable, even rash, as he frankly discounts programs that won't work and those that will and those that only individual responsibility, not legislation, can remedy. A liberal George Wallace who can acknowledge the validity of 20 percent of what George Wallace of Alabama is saying, but expose the rest as hokum and un-American. One offering hope, not fear and retrenchment, in this racially troubled present; one suggesting that stumbling blocks can be converted into stepping stones. One, who may slurp his soup, but loves America for what it ought to be and can convince the American electorate.

SISYPHUS

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REPORT FROM BRITAIN

A RACIAL TALK-IN

I have mentioned before, in these reflections on the scene in Britain, the problem of race relations. But this time I want to devote my space to what seems to be a new, or at any rate, a hitherto little-noticed change in the quality of those relations. *Commonweal* readers may then be able to consider how far the British experience mirrors, at a few years' remove, the U.S. one.

The change was perhaps marked by a headline that recently appeared in the *Guardian* newspaper: "Blacks reject the way of integration." As it stood, the headline was seriously misleading. Yet it was also, in a sense, true. The article beneath this headline concerned a "talk-in" for the black communities which had just taken place in London. The very occasion for this talk-in was significant of the change in attitudes. A high-level forum had been planned, by the UN Social Affairs Division in Geneva, with the cooperation of the government-sponsored Community Relations Commission in London, on race in the U.K. today. The forum was to be funded by the Gulbenkian Foundation, and would obviously have had all the marks of a top-level conference attended by all the VIPs in Britain connected with the race-relations problem. But the Community Relations Officers up and down the country—that is, the local officials who work in our towns and cities on commmunity issues, and who are in touch with the grass-roots feelings of black people themselves (but are themselves sponsored and paid for by public money)—immediately saw the danger of such a forum. Namely that it might easily take place without the people most concerned—the black men and women and children "in the street"—ever being truly consulted about it. What would *they* want such a forum to discuss? What good if any did *they* think it would do? What did *they* think were the really crucial issues? And what did *they* think should be done about them?

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Such questions were in danger of not being raised. The Community Relations Officers therefore asked for the forum itself to be put into cold storage, while a talk-in among the black people themselves was organized to raise just those very questions. This talk-in was to be an occasion for black people to discuss among themselves what they wanted, with the minimum of "white" or official "race-relations industry" there to inhibit or distract them from their task.

But the results of this talk-in were not quite what the organizers had bargained for. For since it had been organized for black people by people identified with the official race-relations industry, the first thing to be done was to purge the meeting of this paradox. Many of the assumptions on which the talk-in had been planned were therefore systematically overturned. For example: it had been part of the plan to hold small group discussions on the main themes—employment, housing and education—with separate groups for the West Indians and Afro members on the one hand, and for the Asians on the other. Presumably this was because it was felt the problems of the two communities were often different, and because language and other difficulties might hinder genuine participation. But one of the first things the meeting decided to do was to hold all such group discussions on an integrated basis, with Indians, Pakistanis, Bangladeshis and others working in the same groups with the West Indians. Members of these groups therefore, began to speak, to and with and for each other, across the color and culture barriers that the organizers had taken for granted. Indeed, perhaps for the first time, the Asians began to call themselves "black" and the West Indians stopped calling the Asians "curry men."

Secondly, certain issues which had not been regarded as paramount by the organizers (though, of course, provision had been made for their discussion) began to come into the foreground of the talk-in as the weekend proceeded. Before even the chronic problems of discrimination in housing and employment, for example, there emerged a profound sense of wrong and injustice over two current issues: (a) the present anti-discrimiation laws and their working, and (b) the plight of unemployed black youngsters in the big cities. On the first of these issues, it was felt that not only was the 1971 Immigration Act a legal monstrosity, but much suspicion was justified even about the present government's intentions in amending it. On the second issue, the need to do something to prevent young blacks from turning to violent crime out of desperation, homelessness and a sense of rejection by white society was constantly reiterated.

But underneath all this, what could be seen as emerging into the daylight was a new feeling among black people themselves of the need to band together, at the local, neighborhood level, to help themselves. Hence the *Guardian* headline. But it would be a mistake to interpret the new mood as one of concerted anti-white "black nationalism." Rather the opposite. For what is happening is that black people are coming together, in small pragmatic ways, to sort out their own problems in their own fashion without taking too much notice of what anybody else says. They are in a sense bypassing the official race-relations industry and its "good offices," and seeking their own solutions through their own efforts. Local black legal advice centers, black youth centers, black hostels for homeless youths, black clubs, churches, shops are emerging. But this pragmatism, this recourse to the idea of self-help, is not as politically naive as it might seem. On the contrary it is politically rather sophisticated. It results not from ignorance of what the official political machinery can do, and is doing, but from an intelligent and canny understanding of what it can't and probably never will do. So not surprisingly the people who had the roughest ride at the talk-in were the figures from the political establishment in the race-relations industry, like the chairman, Lord Pitt, a prominent and much respected West Indian doctor with a long and honorable record in the field, whose speech at the outset put some members' teeth on edge precisely because its rhetoric was that of the public platform, not of the street or the workshop where the real action is.

But perhaps the most obvious signs of political sophistication in the meeting was the refusal of those attending to say anything definite, one way or the other, about the very forum for which the talk-in was supposed to be a preparatory consultative stage. They had been brought together to have their say about the agenda for the forums: but what they said in effect, was, that you can have your forum if you like, but we probably won't be there—we'll be getting on with the real work, here in our own locality where all the problems begin and end.

BRIAN WICKER

(Brian Wicker is Commonweal's *regular correspondent in Great Britain.)*

COMING

DONALD P. WARWICK writes about proposals to use American food to press birth-control programs on the more prolific underdeveloped countries:

"Visible starvation in the Sahel and Bangladesh, the global economic crisis, and rising food prices at home have lent new respectability to Draconian methods of population control. In recent months, not only such inveterate hawks as Garrett Hardin but more moderate observers have seriously proposed either selective food aid or total abandonment of 'hopeless' countries."

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OF THEE, NEVERTHELESS, I SING

ABIGAIL McCARTHY

With his book of this title published in May this year, William Lee Miller gave me back the Fourth of July. In the small town of my childhood the year was punctuated by mornings of wild expectation—some giddier than others but all joyous. We woke on those mornings with the sure sense that something good was going to happen. We knew what that something good was. We had been reassured, year by year, by the annual rituals—of Thanksgiving, Christmas, birthdays, the Fourth of July. Beneath those rituals we felt the affirmations which underlay our lives—of self, faith, family, country.

The Fourth was part of the freedom and glory of summer when we ran barefoot under the maples, swam in the river, and climbed the bluffs. The first sound we heard that morning was the far-off bang of a Minnesota Limit—the largest firecracker allowed —set off by someone who couldn't wait a minute longer. Then we were up and into our own store. Later, after the satisfaction of the noise and the wonderful acrid smell that went with it, there was the parade moving slowly between the flags on standards all down Main Street, once or twice a balloon ascension, and always bands and speeches. Finally, at night, in our own front yard, our own fireworks—skyrockets, Roman candles, and, in my memory the best of all, the magical circling sparklers.

There were things wrong with all this, things having to do with danger and bombast, but, like every true celebration, it was the symbolic expression of a shared belief deeply held and so basic, that it added to the shape and worth of life. We believed that we lived in a free country "dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal," a country with "liberty and justice for all."

We learned, of course, as the years passed, that there was a great deal of work to be done before liberty and justice was a reality for all, and that every bit of past accomplishment in attaining equality had to be vigilantly guarded and maintained. Contradictions multiplied, and, finally, there was Vietnam. And the Fourth on which people close to me argued when I wanted to hang out the flag. I knew that the flag was flaunted then to symbolize the approval of racism, imperialism and the suppression of dissent. But it was still my flag, and I wanted to say with William Lee Miller, "Of thee, nevertheless, I sing." But not with much heart.

It heartens me, now, that Miller acknowledges all our faults and deficiencies, but that he can conclude flatly, "This now not so new nation, despite its particular defects, does have still the continuing possibility of being the kind of society 'our fathers' conceived and brought forth on this continent." He gives two reasons.

One is that we do have free institutions under the law. "Many who shared the rancid anti-Americanism of the Vietnam period came suddenly to appreciate the nation's constitutional foundations when Senator Sam Ervin appeared on the television screen. . . . The society has been open enough and free enough to correct many of its own errors, and to make possible the continuing humane improvement of its social arrangements, *if the citizenry decides to do it.*" (Italics mine)

The other reason, he says, is that the citizens sometimes have decided to do just that. "The moral and intellectual substance in the population is at least as important as the shape of institutions. Free institutions perform well only if free men act responsibly . . . The choice is there. The elements in the cultural heritage are there."

Among times when the choice was made he lists those of our response to the Depression, our role in the defeat of Nazism, our alliance with the free world as opposed to a new isolationism, the civil rights movement and legislation, our final resistance to McCarthyism, and the outcome of Watergate. "By an intricate combination of the integrity of particular individuals, the viability of several institutions, the gradual moral understanding of the public, and luck, we made our way out of the threat to the constitutional system represented by the Nixon scandals." All this required a common ethos, a "body of ideals," and he cites Gunnar Myrdal:

"America, compared to every other country in Western civilization, large or small, has the *most explicitly expressed* system of general ideals in reference to human interrelations. This body of ideals is more widely understood and appreciated than similar ideals anywhere else."

Or was. This book is no apologia; no, as Miller puts it, "speaking up for America." He is well aware of our failures, our lapses and our confusions. He sees them as stemming from "a defective political culture" of which our most recent history gives a series of object lessons.

He examines these dispassionately, wittily, and with such matter of fact common sense that it is almost easy to miss the insights. Why, of all the "radical" books, was Charles Reich's *The Greening of America* so popular? Because it mixed a ferocious indictment of the consumer society—radicals prefer a monolithic evil—with "optimistic evangelism" by promising a revolution which did not require violence or organized effort but which would "seep" by the spreading of a change of consciousness.

Why did the mourning for President Kennedy go so far beyond "the grief and sorrow one feels for a slain states-

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THE POLITICS OF ASSASSINATION

W. CAREY McWILLIAMS

Can assassination ever be an appropriate technique of foreign policy?

In *Manhunt*, cast as a gallant English gentleman in the months before World War II, Walter Pidgeon stalked Adolf Hitler. Until the tyrant was in his sights, he deceived himself into the belief that he only hunted for sport—it was an admittedly uneasy peacetime and bush-whacking was bad form. That self-delusion produced a fatal delay. Audiences were disappointed, and felt better when Pidgeon, having experienced a series of Nazi barbarities, parachuted into Germany (this time, during the war) to have another try. The story mirrored the lesson learned by pre-war generations: international politics is not a game: evil men and forces exist in the world; stern and even shady measures may be needed to protect humanity—one's own humanity included—from intolerable consequences. Assassination, in the era of World War II, was moral and heroic if you picked the right target.

Today, Senator Church is stalking the assassins, supported by the great majority of liberals and applauded on many editorial pages and in the media. The target of the alleged plots does not seem to matter; Senator Church would hardly be numbered among the admirers of the late General Trujillo. Rather, the assumption behind the investigations seems to be that assassination, at least in peacetime, is always wrong even if the hunted is politically odious.

The truth of the charges against the Central Intelligence Agency does not concern me here. I do not know whether the Agency has connived at the murder of foreign rulers, though I have always assumed that it did from time to time. Indeed, the Agency would have been irresponsible if it had not at least considered assassination, as Pidgeon's admirers realized. In severely limited circumstances, assassination is an appropriate technique of foreign policy, and the current mood of absolute condemnation says more about the quality of our domestic political life than it does about international affairs.

In Aristotle's time, it was already trite to observe that the great weakness of even an effective tyranny is that it depends on one human being and that killing the tyrant may be the easiest and least humanly expensive method of change. Of course, change is not always for the better, and the odds in favor of change for the worse are very high in dictatorial regimes. Political crisis and civic corruption are necessary conditions of tyranny, and despots tend to perpetuate both. It did not help to rid Rome of Caesar or South Vietnam of Diem; assassinating one dictator may only install a worse one or do no more than add instability and an anxiously suspicious ruler to the woes of a state.

However, if the tyrant is in some real sense indispensable, if his guile or genius is itself a major asset of his regime, it may be hard to argue against assassination. Without Hitler, Germany would not have been a pleasant state—military authoritarianism might have been the best hope—but it would, in all probability, have been less effective and quite possibly more humane. Too, while crisis may lead a nation to turn to dictatorship (America has done so, for all practical purposes, during her major wars), once-necessary dictators are often tempted to cling to their powers after the crisis which justified them has vanished. Indeed, the general rule is that dictators attempt to perpetuate popular acquiescence or support by

W. CAREY MCWILLIAMS, *the author of* The Idea of Fraternity in America, *teaches in the Political Science Department of Livingston College, Rutgers University, New Jersey.*

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creating crises, which makes tyranny the subject of just suspicion and possible interference on the part of outsiders and the international community as a whole. The last argument of kings, war is the preferred and often the first self-justification of tyrants. Compared to that danger, assassination may be a minor moral or political risk.

The situations which justify assassination—indipensability and usurpation—are severely limited, to be sure. Judgment is critical, and we are wise to be cautious with and concerned to limit the CIA, whose record for success—let alone political acumen or moral sensibility—does not inspire confidence. Yet, however we trim the hedge of law and language, there will be cases in which assassination must be considered if not praised.

Few Americans lamented General Trujillo's passing, and liberals probably applauded when they believed his murder to be the self-moved act of a Dominican citizen. Nor is it true that those, like Senator Church, who are most outraged at evidence of CIA involvement, are opposed to intervention in the domestic governance of another state. Repeatedly, the liberal community calls on the State Department to pressure some unpleasant foreign government to be more democratic or more libertarian. Most liberals, probably, would not be unhappy with covert support for "democratic forces" in a tyrannical state, and almost all liberals support the use of economic coercion to achieve their ends. In Greece, to take only one example, liberal Americans repeatedly denounced the government for failing to do more to oppose the former military junta; at some cost to detente, the Senate sought to use economic power to change Soviet policy toward Jews. Commenting on the liberal preference for "economic sanctions," Reinhold Niebuhr once remarked that it reflected the belief that it is more moral to starve people than to shoot them, and it is tempting to let it go at that.

Our current anxieties regarding assassination, however, have a better and more alarming justification than that. We fear that assassination, like all political violence, may—if it has not already—become a habit in our domestic political life. We are anxious about the survival of our own institutions, not the lives of foreign dictators. And with reason.

Not so long ago, we thought ourselves reasonably immune. In the days of *Manhunt*, Nazi spies did not set out, even in fiction, to assassinate our leading *political* figures. Sometimes, to be sure, they set out to kill or kidnap a *scientist* (a theme that became even more popular in the "atom spy" days of the early Cold War), for according to the popular mystique, scientists of genius were indispensable. But, while a lunatic might try to shoot a president or some other political figure, we were assured that there was no rational motive for doing so. We were convinced, still, that this was a "government of laws" which had dispensed with the need for "enlightened statesmen," as Madison promised it would. An assassination would not change our government, and would only inspire our indignation. Assassination was a weapon formidable only to our enemies and to other, backward states ill-advised enough to rely on the government of one or a few men.

It is probably still true that in the great industrial states an assassination does not have a major impact on policy, although we have certainly learned how critical the marginal difference can be between excellent and debased leadership. If assassination makes no crucial difference, it is *not* because the "government of laws" is in high order; Mr. Nixon's presidency and subsequent revelations suggest what a shambles that government has become. It is even less true that we have relative immunity because of any deep feelings of public spirit or devotion to law. Our relative stability is most strongly supported by the inertia of great bureaucratic regimes, the frustrating immobility produced by complexity and organizations of great size.

We do not even have the security of knowing that things will remain as they are. Our great industrial and governmental bureaucracies rumble mindlessly on, smashing old institutions, habits and ways of life, constantly changing and undeflectable. Like an avalanche, one might say, except that an avalanche does not evoke the haunting awareness that these great forces and organizations are human contrivances, in some sense things of our making and un-making. Not that we can do much about it: individual people do *not* matter except as parts of social categories; even protest movements, to be effective, must be impersonal aggregates, lacking the stability and intimacy of community. We know all this, and it makes us all a bit mad.

We have, for some time, been engaged in a *Manhunt* of our own, not because we are setting out to slay a a tyrant, but because we seek some evidence that human will, intention and personality can matter in politics. We hunger for authority, and fear our desire for it. That, certainly, is a major part of the phenomenon which includes both George Wallace and the Kennedys: the simultaneous desire to exalt and to slay, feelings which often coexist in the same person. Suspecting that no one matters at all, we create myths and fantasies in which some people matter totally. And not far down the road from that impulse lies totalitarianism. The urge to assassinate is only the other side of the yearning to create tyrants worth assassinating.

At some level, we all know how powerful such feelings are, and it is that knowledge that makes us appropriately fearful of allowing anyone, and especially secret agencies like the CIA, a legitimate excuse for political murder. Americans need no lessons, after Watergate, in the ways in which ordinary men, not so different from the rest of us, can use the cover and color of the law.

All our fears are well-founded, but they become self-

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defeating if we seek to abolish political judgment and power where they must exist, most notably in foreign affairs but also in the great domestic crises like energy and the economy. The attempt to correct the abuse of public power by absolute prohibition and law is an old one in America, but one which is most often either futile or destructive of our ability to apply public power to public purposes. And these days, to lack that power is to make ourselves even more the prisoners of the great impersonal forces we fear, a circular politics which could easily become a political *danse macabre.*

Assassination is a relatively small matter, and we can probably afford a mistake. It indicates, nevertheless, how easily we become diverted by small matters and facile answers, and how easily we ignore the real task: restoring a politics which provides the conviction and experience that political life can matter, and which builds the public spirit and the sense of personal dignity which are the true foundation of a government of laws.

For another view on the topic of assassination, see editorial on page 259. THE EDITORS

CHILE'S SILENT CHURCH

GARY MacEOIN

The emphasis is on individual rather than social salvation

From early colonial times until 1950, the role of the Catholic Church in the public life of Chile experienced no significant change. The Church had come to Chile, as generally to Latin America, as junior partner to an empire-building group which developed in Chile—as elsewhere—into a tightly knit oligarchy that saw itself as sole depository of power and decision-making (always, of course, within the area of maneuver accorded it by a succession of "metropolitan" overlords). The Church never exercised power over this oligarchy. Instead, it served as legitimator and provided moral sanctions to support the physical sanctions imposed by the second perennial institution, the armed forces.

Schematically, and at the hemispheric level, the Church has been ruled by the oligarchy (5 percent of the population). It has exercised significant positive and negative influence on the servants of the oligarchy, the 15 percent who live somewhat on the level of the middle classes in North America and who are served by churches, schools, hospitals and similar institutions. It has exercised a mainly negative influence on the 40 percent today identified as earning the minimum wage (minimum human survival level), for whom it provides godparents, saints' days and other largely superstitious services; and relatively little influence on the 40 percent living below the human level.

Chile was not totally typical, particularly because substantial immigration from Europe in the nineteenth century of workers already conscious of the inequities of the capitalist system speeded up processes that came more slowly in most of Latin America. The Conservative and Liberal branches of the oligarchy joined early in the National Party under the threat from labor, and considerable segments of the workers emancipated themselves completely from Church influence. But the picture remained mixed. The combination of hacendade and parish priest could still guarantee election of the reactionary National Party nominee in many rural areas, a factor highly distortive of the real desires and needs of the people of Chile in every election held during the twentieth century.

The possibility that the Church might have a judgmental role—and not merely a legitimating one—on and for society was tentatively raised in the 1930s, following Pius XI's *Quadragesimo Anno* (1931). In that encyclical, Pius agreed with Lenin that it was of the nature of "free enterprise" to evolve into monopoly capitalism "an international imperialism whose country is where profit is," a system not able to curb or control itself, and in consequence ultimately self-destructive. The free market, Pius charged, "of its own nature" concentrates power in antisocial types, in those "who fight most violently and give least heed to their conscience." It is Darwinism gone mad.

Backing off from the categorical condemnations of his predecessors, Pius noted the recent split of the social movement into "a more violent section, communism; and a more moderate section which retains the name of socialism." Observing that the programs of the moderates "often strikingly approach the just demands of Christian social reformers," he claimed that they could be better realized in the corporate state which he saw as a middle way between capitalism and communism. Many Church leaders then saw Salazar's Portugal as the hope of the future, and it was under just such a program

GARY MacEOIN *is the author most recently of* No Peaceful Way: The Chilean Struggle for Dignity (*Sheed & Ward*).

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that two university Catholic activists in Chile, Eduardo Frei and Radomiro Tomic, started the reform movement that after World War II developed into Christian Democracy. Those origins, including Pius's distinctions and suggested solution, were to weigh heavily on the development of social reform in Chile from then onward.

The oligarchy reacted violently to the Frei-Tomic suggestion that there could be a party in Chile claiming to be Christian other than the National Party which was the one and only *Catholic* party, and they ordered the bishops to condemn the upstarts, an action that would have been taken but for the determined opposition of a single young bishop, Manuel Larraín of Talca.

Larraín was really a very moderate reformer, but he was conscious that the social situation in Chile was degenerating rapidly and that the Church would go down with the oligarchy if it continued its historic subservient role. He played a leading part in the creation of CELAM (*Consejo Episcopal Latin-americano*), and he learned how to survive in the hostile climate of the Chilean church—as Dom Helder Camara would later in Brazil—by building an international reputation. He was prominent among the progressives at Vatican Council II (1962-65) and made a contribution second only to that of the French Dominican priest, L. J. Lebret, to Pope Paul's encyclical on world development, *Populorum Progressio*. Regrettably both Lebret and Larraín had died before it was issued in 1967, Larraín victim of an automobile accident.

(I had an amusing experience of the efforts of the Chilean oligarchy to keep their monopoly of Catholic orthodoxy by downgrading Larraín. In 1961 I interviewed him for a United States magazine, quoting him as favoring major land reform in Chile, with the Church giving the example—he did in fact distribute all Church land in his diocese of Talca to the peasants who farmed it—and asserting that the Church had a scripture-based duty to be biased toward the poor. The magazine sent me galleys to Santiago to check and I showed them to the editor of the Santiago diocesan weekly who recognized the news value, translated into Spanish and featured on page one. *El Diario Illustrado*, organ of the oligarchy, shot back with a bitter editorial. Chilean bishops, it said, should know better than to talk to United States newsmen who always distorted their stories. And the editor of a Chilean newspaper that claimed to represent the Church should not be so ignorant as to fail to recognize the heretical teachings on the class war he was attributing to a Chilean bishop. The double joke was that Bishop Larraín had seen my English text and congratulated me in a gracious letter, which I understandably treasure, for "la fidelidad con que ha expresado mi pensamiento." The Chilean editor in turn had taken the additional precaution of submitting to the bishop his Spanish translation.)

The growing strength of the Left after World War II made other bishops recognize the need for new strategies. In 1956 they asked the Jesuit general in Rome to send them some social scientists who would develop strategies to counter the propaganda of the socialists led by Salvador Allende. One he sent was a Belgian Jesuit, Roger Vekemans, who soon became a key figure in the campaign to stop Allende, especially when Allende all but won the presidency in 1958.

Vekemans and his associates decided that the old ways were no longer viable. Socialist reform could be countered only by Christian reform. The result was a major shift of the Chilean Church to the *reformism* of the Christian Democrats expressed in the slogan of revolution in liberty which carried Frei to victory in 1964. In organizing that Frei campaign, Vekemans developed a series of programs, some funded by a West German aid agency, others by United States groups who later were revealed to have been fronts for and funded by the CIA. ITT and various U.S. government agencies —including the CIA—also poured money through other channels into the Frei campaign.

It is now clear, I would say it was already clear by 1967, half-way through the Frei presidency, that the coalition on which he rested lacked not only a consistent ideology but unity of objectives. Some elements wanted no change in the traditional monopoly of power. Others really believed they had found a middle way between capitalism and socialism in the formulations of Pius XI as expanded by Vatican II's "Constitution on the Church in the Modern World" and still further (in 1968) by the Medellin statements of the Latin American bishops. I have analyzed what I regard as the illogic, the inadequacy and lack of realism of those documents on other occasions most formally in *Revolution Next Door* written in 1970. For the present purposes, I need only note that they correctly stressed the need for radical, urgent and revolutionary change in Latin America, then offered as the way that change must come "a radical modification by businessmen and their organizations, as well as the political authorities, of their attitudes and methods as those affect the purpose, organization and operation of their enterprises." In other words, they were telling the Chileans (and other Latin Americans) that they must await the conversion of the CIA and ITT and the rest of the gang who monopolized political and economic power.

Space forbids a deep probing of the subconscious elements which force many Christians, particularly Roman Catholics, to live comfortably with this concept of moral imperatives which marginalizes them in the process of creating a world fit for human habitation. I will merely note that this typical bourgeois ideology results from having internalized a set of abstract, a-historical ethical values, such as democracy, participation in the political process on a level of total mathematical

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equality, a repudiation of violence understood—again a-historically—as doing active deliberate hurt to another, a repudiation resulting from a selective interpretation of biblical texts, and a concept of liberty as an attitude of mind unrelated to structural conditions.

The almost unbroken tradition of Chilean politics is that a president is elected on an extremely progressive platform, quickly modifies it and finally reverses it under the pressures of the power-monopolizing oligarchy. Frei was no exception, and by 1967 his Christian Democratic party was fragmenting into the temporizers and those committed to and aware of the urgent need of radical reform. And so we have MAPU (*Movimiento de Acción Popular Unido*) in 1969, followed later by MIC (*Movimiento Izquierdista Cristiane*), while some members join the extreme left MIR (*Movimiento Izquierdista Revolucionario*). This shift of emphasis and allegiance was paralleled in the Church, where small but influential numbers of priests and lay leaders, followed parallel lines, starting with the Iglesia Joven movement in 1968, and the declaration of "The 80" priests in 1971. They

publicly espoused socialism and followed up with the creation of "Christians for Socialism" in 1972, a movement which then had and still has worldwide resonances. By this time, the old Catholic-Protestant rivalry had yielded to a new split: progressive Catholics and Protestants against reactionary Catholics and Protestants. From that time, Protestant ministers played a significant role in "Christians for Socialism." Those groups rejected the middle way, insisting that socialism was the only alternative to capitalism, and that Christians and Marxists must unite to end the institutionalized violence of the capitalist power structures.

Jesuit Gonzalo Arroyo, recognized leader and theoretician for "Christians for Socialism," makes a point I regard as important. "These socialist Christians did not try to derive their political stance from their faith, even though they felt that it dovetailed with the gospel message and with Jesus' predilection for the poor and their liberation. They derived their political stance from an analysis which they wanted to be as objective and scientific as possible, and which they saw authenticated by the political praxis of the workers and their avant-garde. But they asserted that their Christian faith was enlivened and vivified by their political activity—that is, by their active involvement in history with the working class and its liberation."

The existence of this revolutionary current, even though a definitely minor one, undoubtedly helped the formal neutrality of the Chilean bishops during the 1970 elections which gave Allende the presidency, and the institutional Church's collaboration and normally good relations with the predominantly Marxist government of the Popular Unity coalition. But none of the bishops was ever converted to the dialectical interpretation of events which underlay the stand of "Christians for Socialism." They remained at best committed to developmentalism, while several of them were still in the traditional attitude of emotional identification with the oligarchy and committed to the class structures which left most Chileans voiceless and powerless. For them, as for Pope Pius IX in *Nostris et Nobiscum* (1849), "it is not given to men to establish new societies and communities opposed to the natural state of human affairs."

When in 1973, Chilean and international capitalism shed its reformist mask, confirming the view always affirmed by MIR and held with varying degrees of clarity by many members of the Popular Unity coalition that those who monopolize power will not permit the transformation of society by legal, democratic methods, the institutional Church in Chile lacked a realistic analysis of what was taking place. In consequence, its response was totally inadequate to the needs of the situation. It apparently believed, as Frei did, that Chile would experience a conventional coup d'état, a change of the palace guard: the elimination of Allende and "constitutional" installation of Frei, next in line as head of the Senate. It was utterly unprepared for the savage counter-revolution, the only logical alternative to a continuation of the Allende-headed revolution given the internal and external balance of social forces and pressures, a counterrevolution which condensed into weeks the destruction of popular institutions and the physical elimination of popular leadership which had taken years in Brazil. Apparently, it had not even been listening when Nixon proposed Brazil as the prototype of the coming Latin America.

Cardinal Raúl Silva, head of the Chilean episcopate, behaved with great personal propriety throughout the entire process, publicly acknowledging the democratic decision which brought a Marxist to power in 1970, maintaining a cooperative attitude to the Popular Unity regime and repeatedly praising reforms it effected (including the nationalization of copper) as in Chile's best interests and strictly constitutional. Nor is there reason to doubt that his initial contacts with the Junta were principally motivated by the desire to save innocent lives, an effort in which he had considerable success.

Nevertheless, in the light of history, I fear Cardinal

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Silva will emerge as less than a hero or a reader of the signs of the times. One problem is personal in the sense of his class conditioning. Like all members of the oligarchy everywhere in Latin America (and bishops are ex officio assimilated to the oligarchy and its mores), he believed he could do business with the generals or anyone else in power as one club member to another. That day is over, if only because the area within which the oligarchs can decide freely has been radically narrowed. The decisions are now made by computers in New York, London, Tokyo and the counterparts in Moscow with whom their exchange of confidences is steadily greater and more cordial.

The second problem is that winning the battle for individual lives (some of them) lost the war for the life of the people. Like modern Catholic theology, Silva thought of individual rather than social salvation. In November 1973, in the Vatican's *Osservatore Romano*, he told the Junta that the Church in Chile offered it the same cooperation it had offered "to all those works on behalf of the common good that had been sponsored by the Marxist government of President Allende." The Junta was offended by having the Allende regime placed on equal terms. In fact, it was being legitimated by the Church. The savages who had destroyed all of Chile's most cherished institutions, killed thousands, expelled thousands, imprisoned thousands, driven hundreds of thousands from their jobs, were acknowledged to be as legitimate a government as the one the people had chosen for itself in free elections.

Since September 1973

The efforts of the Church to maintain itself in being as an institution and to exercise an influence on events since Sept. 1973 can be conveniently divided into several periods, all of them marked by continuing tension as the Church sought to retain the autonomy it had been accorded by Allende, while the Junta sought to use it.

In the first period, the Church (working ecumenically, particularly with Lutheran Bishop Helmut Frenz) engaged in the Committee of Cooperation for Peace and other organizations in a major humanitarian effort to help individuals in the name of human rights. That meant negotiating and making concessions, and effectively acknowledging the legitimacy of a system founded on violence, so that the Church in fact contributed to creating and strengthening tyrannical structures. The Church's position was further clouded by a document sent in the name of the bishops (but representing only some Junta supporters) in December 1973 to bishops in many other countries. It was labeled confidential but used shamelessly to slander Allende and his regime and justify all the excesses of the Junta. One such use was an article in *Maryknoll* magazine repeating all its lies and half-truths without indication of the source. It was written by Maryknoller Miguel d'Escoto, a longtime activist with Jesuit Roger Vekemans in his varied well-heeled anti-socialist activities. (Vekemans, incidentally, fled Chile in 1970 when Allende was elected, was soon back in big business in the more congenial atmosphere of Bogotá, Colombia.) Meanwhile, criticisms expressed by bishops were both ambiguous and in private, never an appeal to public opinion, all of which further tended to legitimate the oppressive and usurping structures.

A significant change occurred in the spring of 1974 when the Secretariat of the Chilean bishops issued a document signed by Cardinal Silva "for all the bishops of Chile," which for the first time challenged basic positions of the Junta. It said a new Constitution will need the approval of the people "after discussion in which all citizens can participate actively and knowledgeably." It chided the Junta's violation of the rights of citizens, the climate of fear and insecurity, rising unemployment and firing of workers for arbitrary or ideological reasons, the restructuring of the economy to impose "an excessive amount of sacrifice" on wage-earners.

Although stated to be the view of all the bishops, this document accelerated an open rift in the hierarchy. One group of bishops identifies the welfare of religion with the objectives of the Junta. Its principal members are Archbishop Emilio Tagle Covarrubias (Valparaiso), Bishops Juan Fresno Larraín (La Serena) Eladio Vicuña Aránguiz (Puerto Montt), and Maximiano Valdés Subercaseaux (Osorr). This group has openly broken unity with the other bishops, especially with formal statements of Tagle and Fresno.

A second group adopts a cautious yet openly critical position, particularly on human rights, as expressed in the Easter 1974 statement. Its leaders are Cardinal Silva, Bishops Carlos Camus Larena (sec. gen. of the bishops' conference), Fernando Ariztía Ruiz (Copiapó), Carlos González Cruchaga (Talca), Bernardino Piñera Carvallo (Temuco), and Jorge Hourton and Enrique Alvear Urrutia (both auxiliaries of Santiago). The rest of the bishops are hesitant.

The Junta is enormously conscious of the importance of restoring the oligarchy's traditional control of the Church as legitimator and moral protector of the regime. Responding to the Pope's call for New Year's Day 1975 as a day for peace, Pinochet cabled his total commitment to the same objective, adding that his regime reflected and expressed the beliefs and practices of Catholicism. The attempt to create a new religion by giving special meanings to traditional theological language goes back to the installation of the regime. The magazine *Tizona* in Oct. 1973 captioned a photo of the bombing of La Moneda: "The Purification of La Moneda." At Easter 1974, *El Mercurio* headed a full-page essay: "Our Country has Died and Risen from the Dead." The text included an interview with a cleric who

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How there came to be only one telephone company in town.

"Number please."

"In many cities of the United States, and in rural communities as well, there are dual and competing telephone systems, doing both local and long-distance business...Patrons of these telephone systems are put to endless annoyance and increased expense. In order to reach all the people using telephones, the telephone patron finds he must install two telephones in his house and office...Double systems of cables, wires and conduits burden the streets and highways."

—Report of the House of Representatives Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce, 67th Congress (1921)

When Alexander Graham Bell's telephone patents expired in 1893 and 1894, new telephone companies sprang up almost overnight. The accepted way of organizing communications was to have the "dual and competing telephone systems" cited in the Congressional report.

"Call us. We're on the Bell," was a frequent invitation in those days, to friends customers. Central, the voice of "Num- lease?", spent a lot of time explaining to customers that the number wanted was on the town's other telephone system. And each month there were two telephone bills to pay.

A solution to the problem had been worked out long before by John Stuart Mill. In 1847 Mill had studied the situation of two other new industries that supplied water and gas through pipes to the homes and businesses of London:

"It is obvious, for example, how great an economy of labour would be obtained if London were supplied by a single gas or water company instead of the existing plurality. While there are even as many as two, this implies double establishments of all sorts, when only one, with a small increase, could probably perform the whole operation equally well; double sets of machinery and works, when the whole of the gas and water required could generally be produced by one set only; even double sets of pipes, if the companies did not prevent this needless expense by agreeing upon a division of the territory. Were there only one establishment, it could make lower charges, consistently with obtaining the rate of profit now realized."

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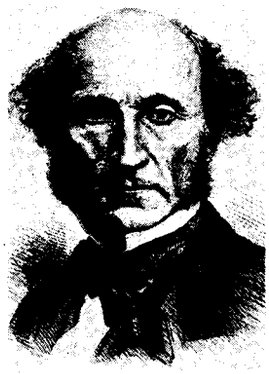
Such a consolidation, Mill saw, was clearly in the public interest. The concept of a "public utility" was reinforced.



John Stuart Mill

When Edison's electric light superseded illuminating gas, the parallel was obvious. It was not quite so obvious for the telephone.

It was not hard to see that the public benefited from having water piped into homes. But while some viewed the telephone companies as providing a similar vital service, others regarded them as being more akin to manufacturers selling ingenious machines in the luxury class. When only a few people had telephones, one observer called them "electric toys." Should Bell's invention be compared with Edison's new electric light, or was it more like his phonograph? As the proportion of homes and businesses with telephones grew, the usefulness of the telephone increased greatly.

Then there was the matter of geographic area served. An exclusive franchise for a specified area is a natural corollary of Mill's concept of a public utility. And exclusiveness was a troublesome subject.

When two or more rivals supply a similar service, competition keeps each up to the mark, or else some eventually lose customers and go out of business. If in the public interest, government removes that rivalry by granting exclusive franchises, then government must provide the mechanisms for preventing arbitrary or excessive charges or unreasonable or discriminatory regulations.

The doctrine of public regulation of privately owned resources has its roots in Roman law and the tenet of *justum pretium* —"just price." English common law provided a rationale for regulation. In an essay on rates for wharf services, Sir Matthew Hale, Lord Chief Justice of England, established in 1670 the criterion that private industries "affected with a public interest" may be regulated by the public:

> "If the King or subject have a public wharf unto which all persons that come to that port must come and unload their goods...because they are the only wharfs licensed by the King...or because there is no other wharf in that port...there cannot be taken arbitrary and excessive duties...but the duties must be reasonable and moderate....For now the wharf and crane and other conveniences are affected with a public interest."

Various municipal boards did undertake to control the quality of service provided by water, gas and electric companies, usually through periodic reviews of franchises granted. It was no easy task. For quality of service leads quickly to questions of cost: good service for the price charged;

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equal prices for all customers for services of a similar nature, so that no one is discriminated against; adequate service capacity so that anyone able to pay for the service can have it.

Local officials had their hands full regulating the three industries already mentioned (water, gas, electricity). They were not eager to take on the responsibility of regulating the telephone business. And so redundant companies continued to exist in many towns. Confusion multiplied geometrically as the companies strung long distance lines to connect various cities.

Theodore N. Vail

Soon after he was elected A.T.&T. President in 1907, Vail enunciated the goal: "One policy, one system, universal service." He saw that the future of the business depended on having one unified telephone service for the entire nation—a service that every family and business could enjoy. That meant ending duplicate telephone companies, replacing them with exclusive telephone franchises. In other words, Vail understood that it was not enough for the nation to have telephone companies. What was needed—and what he sought to create—was a *telephone system.* Vail saw, too, that the very "exclusivity" of the franchises invited—indeed, demanded—regulation by officials elected or supported by the public to protect the public interest.

Vail thus agreed with the efforts of Gov. Charles Evans Hughes of New York and Senator Robert M. LaFollette of Wisconsin, who were working to persuade state legislatures to try a new approach to regulation through state utility commissions—responsive to the public at the state level—as best serving the public interest.

The state commissions, supported by public desire for efficient regulation, worked. Most public utilities came to be regulated on a statewide basis, and a framework of efficient regulation was set.

Vail recognized, however, that national regulation also was a necessary complement to state regulation, particularly since one company—A.T.&T.—was chiefly responsible for interconnecting the individual telephone companies into a telephone system.

As noted earlier, regulation of telephone companies already had begun to develop at the state level. But on the national level—for telephone lines and services crossing state boundaries—there was no federal counterpart to the state regulatory commissions, although telegraph companies had been regulated to some extent by the Postmaster General and the Interstate Commerce Commission under statutes dating back to the 19th century.

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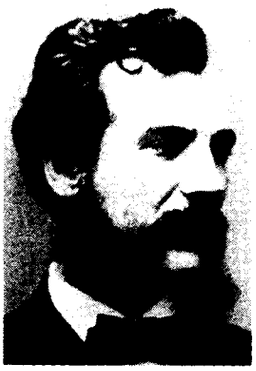

Alexander Graham Bell

The first effort at comprehensive federal regulation came in the Mann-Elkins Act of 1910, amending the Interstate Commerce Act. Telephone, telegraph and cable companies were declared to be common carriers subject to ICC regulation.

Federal regulation took a new turn in 1934 with the passage by Congress of the Communications Act, which established the Federal Communications Commission. The intent of Congress—as it had been the intent of both Bell and Vail—is outlined in Section I of the Communications Act:

"For the purpose of regulating interstate and foreign communications by wire and radio so as to make available, so far as possible, to all the people of the United States a rapid, efficient, nationwide and worldwide wire and radio communication service with adequate facilities at reasonable charges...."

Almost alone among the nations of the world, then, this country entrusted the development and operation of its communications resources to private enterprise. It endowed companies with the rights and responsibilities of common carriers, each solely privileged to purvey its services within its territory but all in turn strictly accountable through state and national regulation to the public they serve.

Has it worked?

In 1968, President Johnson's Task Force on Communications Policy concluded, "It can be truly said that the United States has the finest telephone system in the world."

That kind of service didn't just happen. It was planned that way, right from the start.

One Bell System. It works.

Bell System

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compared the 3-year death of Chile under marxism to Christ's suffering, death and glorious Resurrection. A large photograph dominating the page showed two soldiers embracing. They were the disciples rejoicing at the good news and now entrusted with the task of spreading it.

The theory is carried over into practice. The Junta has worked hard and successfully to smash episcopal collegiality. It makes bilateral arrangements with heads of institutions, bypassing Church authorities. It names the heads of Church-related educational and welfare organizations. Any attempts by Christian groups to express themselves publicly in favor of social liberation are ruthlessly smashed. The educational system is being completely restructured and reoriented along the same fascist lines already established in Brazil, with no regard for views of parents or of the school community. Even the celebrations of the Holy Year of 1975 are strictly regulated. General S. A. Stark, head of the Second Army Division, has told the Church authorities of Santiago that expressions must be strictly religious and are permitted only within parish premises and private homes, with full advance information to the security forces. The bishop and pastor must authorize each manifestation, and the bishop will be held personally responsible for any infraction.

Such was the situation at the end of 1974. The first months of 1975 were marked by a series of events indicating the determination of the Junta to continue its efforts to domesticate the Churches while conducting elaborate campaigns of international propaganda to anesthetize world opinion. It gave a great play to a statement signed by 32 Protestant churchmen (including Bishop T. R. Vasquez of the United Methodist Church) proclaiming the Junta as "God's reply to the prayers of all believers who saw in marxism the satanic force of darkness carried to its culmination." Spokesmen for the World Council of Churches and the U.S. National Council of Churches expressed surprise at this "breach in the Christian community," and the Latin American Catholic news agency Noticias Aliadas said it contrasted radically with the stand of the Catholic Church and that of the Lutherans and other major Protestant Churches.

Another "whitewash" operation was a series of talks and press conferences in the United States under the aegis of the violently anti-communist Cardinal Mindszenty Foundation by a Catholic priest on leave from Chile who insisted that Chileans are solidly behind the Junta, that the economy is in excellent shape, and that even those guilty of crimes have been and are being treated leniently.

Evidence is mounting that the Junta will succeed, within a matter of months, in destroying the Committee of Cooperation for Peace, the sole institution attempting to develop long-term programs to deal with the unemployment, poverty and hunger which the Junta's economic policies have imposed on supporters of the previous regime. Cardinal Silva told a private meeting of bishops at Easter that its work would be finished by the end of the year, and Jonathan Kandell has reported in the *New York Times* (May 5) that he has repeated this statement several times. While the Committee has Protestant and Jewish cooperation, its legal basis comes from the cardinal and can be withdrawn by him at will.

In addition to being the one symbol of hope for Chile's poor, the Committee is still seen by churchmen and other observers from other countries as desperately needed to continue its original work of searching for missing persons, providing legal aid to political detainees, and collecting data on abuse of authority. For Jonathan Kandell, it "has become virtually synonymous with church concern for human rights." In actual fact, there has been no let-up in the programs of oppression. One Chilean bishop has revealed that the incidence of violations of human rights and the unexplained disappearance of Chilean citizens was higher in the first four months of 1975 than in the same period a year earlier.

A report submitted by a group of Chilean priests to the Easter meeting of the bishops insisted that the evils denounced by the bishops a year earlier (see above) had intensified, and that new violations had been added, specifically "manipulations of consciences and an alarming reduction of health services for the poor." They urged the bishops to take a firmer and more open stand against the Junta for the sake of the people as well as for the long-term good of the Church.

Will this happen? A priest friend of mine, who is close to Cardinal Silva and who until recently remained optimistic, has given me an answer with which I cannot disagree. "I believe that the Church still figures that there will be a way to solve diplomatically the differences between Church and State. This is the so-called 'Polish solution.' I personally am convinced that only the clearest stand against the Junta is in accord with the gospel and also will give the Church credibility for the future. I doubt that the Church will take this stand. I suspect that this will be one of the elements leading to bloody conflict in Latin America."

AN APPEAL:—Loretto Sisters are conducting a six-months nutrition project in India affecting more than 9,000 persons. In Calcutta the focus is on city slums; in Bombay on drought-stricken or flood-ravaged surrounding areas. The food supplements and health services differ according to the respective needs in the two communities. For example, children near Bombay suffering from night blindness for lack of Vitamin A receive six vitamin-protein biscuits a day to restore their sight. Contributions are needed if this notably effective program is to continue. Address: Catholic Relief Services, 1011 First Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022.

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THE STAGE

Arena Stage in Washington has mounted the most sensational Soviet play since Gorky. It's called *The Ascent of Mount Fuji* by Chingiz Aitmatov and Kaltai Mukhamedzhanov, both residents of the Kirghiz SSR in Central Asia bordering Western China. What was sensational about the play in its Moscow premiere two years ago was its open, matter-of-fact handling of the sensitive subject of the suppression of dissidents by the Soviet state. The sensation continued through the play's various appearances in East European cities, and it has played in Washington to audiences equally fascinated by the simple fact that *Fuji* was allowed to be produced in Moscow and in other Warsaw Pact nations.

The authors are neither defectors, exiles nor themselves particularly anti-Soviet. Aitmatov is a member not only in good standing but of high standing in the Communist Party in Kirghiz. Like all the characters in *Fuji,* he is a believing Communist and clearly among the things he believes is the efficacy of facing facts, however unpleasant..

The fact faced in *Fuji* is particularly unpleasant and the precise nature of it is the key to why the play is not merely sensational but also highly satisfactory as drama. The play isn't really about the awful things the Soviets have done to dissident thinkers during Stalin's rule, before Stalin and after Stalin. That practice of the state against its own citizens is merely a condition against which the real drama takes place. The drama is that of four surviving and mostly successful Soviet citizens facing or refusing to face, owning up to or obfuscating the fact that one of them and in some sense all of them betrayed a friend into the hands of the state apparatus.

The four friends, old schoolmates and Red Army comrades in the Second World War, come together for a reunion on a mountain top in Kirghiz, where all of them were born and brought up. Host is the manager of a nearby collective farm, a man who accepted conditions as they are and worked his way within them to a respectable position in the region. Also present is a history teacher who has not entirely gone along with conditions as they exist and consequently has remained at a low level of professional advancement. The other two men have made it big, one a scientific academician with a convenient accommodation or two of his own in his career, the other an international journalist, specializing in the third world and the advance of socialism among deprived peoples everywhere, a man, the play swiftly makes clear, who has built a brilliant career by knowing exactly when and in what direction the wind of the official line is changing.

Three of the wives of the men are along, but they are aspectual to the play, drawing out or being reacted to by the principals. Also along is their former teacher, a woman, who inspired the men in school with a love for socialism and who proudly sent them off to the war in its defense. She is anything but aspectual.

The mountain they are on—a mild one, to be sure—has been named Fuji by the farm manager's wife and early on they agree to keep the traditional Buddhist convention that on the original Fuji one faces one's innermost soul and comes to terms with the reality of one's past.

At once the absent comrade becomes the most important member of the outing. Sabur was a poet and inseparable from the others. A firm believer, like the others, he fought honorably in the war, but as the Red Army was driving the Nazis back toward the Russian frontier, Sabur wrote a long poem in which he advocated or seemed to advocate that the Soviet troops stop at their own borders, ensuring independence for the Eastern European nations following the inevitable collapse of the already ruined German forces.

The poem was never published and was circulated only among the five friends. Yet Sabur was seized by the authorities, taken away and never seen again. He was destroyed as a person through the standard Soviet treatment of dissidents, through prisons and madhouses, interrogations and tortures, even Siberia. Well along, we learn that after all he had been invited to the reunion and had replied, "Consider that I was killed in the war; I do not exist."

The play is structured as if it were itself an ascent from one level of understanding to the next. Once the commitment to Fuji-like truth is made, the memory of Sabur, or rather of Sabur's betrayal, takes over. The first act is almost a kind of detective story. Even more than the characters, the audience is trying to figure out who did in the poet. Suspicion is expertly diverted from one of the men to another. Most audience members probably conclude it was the journalist making his first move in a careerism based on sacrificing anything asked. But no conclusions are reached; the culprit could easily have been the academician, who has made the same kind of compromise professionally, perhaps even the history teacher, whose subsequent career-stalling has been by way of atonement or horror at what he was capable of.

We get no answer but pass, in the second act, to a level of concern a little higher. The men's old schoolteacher has arrived and becomes the center of the continuing inquiry, of which the question now becomes; Granted the betrayal, how could we all have sat silent while our friend and comrade simply disappeared from the earth? Again, the four survivors go through the de-

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grees of complicity and condonement: Protest would have done no good; witness of Sabur's essential innocence would merely have implicated, perhaps incriminated, the witness; mere inquiry would have been dangerous as well as futile, probably made things worse for the prisoner. And so on.

The aging teacher cuts through all this with a poignant glimpse of the guilt she, the least involved, has carried through the years: "I should have hammered on windows."

The teacher departs and, led by the journalist, the men get drunk by way of celebration and absolution. Reverting to schoolboys, they end the act throwing stones down the mountain.

In the morning, as they are packing up for the return to "real life," a forest ranger arrives: last night an old woman was killed on the road apparently by a flung stone. When he leaves to fetch the authorities, the characters behave absolutely in character and we see, with tragic inevitability, that the betrayals of silence and desertion are as possible at the end as they were before the beginning. The men gladly flee down from the austere and icy heights of the mountain of conscience they have ascended.

The production, in Arena's adjacent end-stage house, the Kreeger, is first-rate. Zelda Fichandler's direction has welded her resident company into precisely the collective body, with individual variations, that the theme of the play demands. There are one or two shrill moments that might better have been modulated, but the play is so strong that it carries them with no trouble. The set, by Ming Cho Lee, is indeed a high mountain, full of sky and distant views and a great variety of levels for the changing relationships among the characters and their past. Leslie Cass as the teacher is magnificent as the voice of suppressed conscience forcing itself free, Richard Bauer ingeniously devious as the journalist, as twisting in body and face as the lines make him in mind.

There is an easy and self-serving American reaction ready to hand to meet the dramatic excellence and political provocation of *The Ascent of Mount Fuji.* Thank heaven, it is not like that with us, we have civil liberties, freedom of speech, due process and so on and so on. Or, on the other hand, how interesting it is that the Soviets have allowed this play to be staged: clearly they are moving toward some relaxation of the traditional ways of repression and at the same time repudiating certain monster-figures from their past, horrors who always seem to be threatening resurrection.

All this is very true, but it is not the main point to be derived from an exceptionally rich and challenging play. Beyond the purely dramatic rewards, and these are substantial, the American meaning of the play is something like, It's the same the whole world over, or, Brother, you are my brother, or, from the Old Testament, Thou art the man. Washington, at any rate, is full of upper-level bureaucrats who, in the time of Joe McCarthy, built their careers on precisely the silences and betrayals *Fuji* is about. Could it happen again like the Soviets with their stone-throwing? Read the papers.

FRANK GETLEIN

PROFITSY

THE SCREEN

No industry devotes more executive think time to forecasting trends than the movie business does, and the current wisdom in this arcane specialty seems to have it that prognostication itself is the coming thing. What we mustn't overlook in all these disaster films, for instance, is that they are all *predictions* of disasters to come. Indeed, even when we are being treated to a costume drama set in the past, we have the feeling at the movies these days that what we are seeing is still somehow intended not as history, but as prophecy. The last of the many clichés which have been our response to Vietnam is that "those who do not learn from the past are condemned to repeat it." Therefore, at the movies, as elsewhere, we are trying frantically to figure out what it is we are supposed to have learned about the day after tomorrow.

Norman Jewison's new multi-million dollar extravaganza, *Rollerball,* suggests that what the future holds for us is a completely self-sufficient society, a society which even manages, literally, to incorporate war. This is accomplished with a game, Rollerball, which is an amalgam of roller derby, hockey, motorcycle racing and roulette. The only malcontent in the whole society is Rollerball's greatest superstar, Jonathan E. (James Caan), who is upset because they want him to retire. (Since the game is supposed to demonstrate the futility of individual effort, Jonathan defeats its purpose.) Despite a little razzle-dazzle and grandstanding by him at the end, however, even his rebellion doesn't prove that much of a problem.

Nor do Jewison's sensibilities prove much of an impediment to making a conventionally slick, violent film. More than a film about the society it depicts, *Rollerball* looks like something made in that society. Jewison's camera glides, tracks and racks focus with a lulling mindlessness that makes the movie itself into the sort of clean machine that the society in it is. In fact *Rollerball* seems so self-sufficient, self-contained a movie that it is almost self-reviewing. It efficiently supplies all the metaphor necessary to describe its own inadequacy. Attempting to deliver a roundhouse punch to all civilization, the film misses and socks itself right in the puss

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instead. At one point Jonathan wants to read a book and is referred to a computer which is the last repository of the world's libraries. But the computer's keeper (Ralph Richardson) complains because now that all human knowledge is in the computer, the computer has become hopelessly ambiguous.. That's the kind of ambiguity Jewison's film has too—the kind that, intending to say it all, ends up saying nothing.

Maybe Norman Jewison is just a contemporary version of the young man who is the hero in Nathaniel West's 1930s novel about Hollywood, *The Day of the Locust*. A studio art director who is over-educated for his work, West's hero, Tod, is also doing an epic painting entitled "The Burning of Los Angeles." Like Jewison, in other words, Tod both is working in the movie colony and predicting an end to the civilization it represents. Like Jewison, though perhaps more reluctantly, Tod thinks of himself as a prophet. Of Tod West observed, "He told himself that . . . he was an artist, not a prophet. His work would not be judged by the accuracy with which it foretold a future event but by its merit as a painting. Nevertheless, he refused to give up the role of Jeremiah."

At the end of West's novel Tod does turn out to have been Jeremiah too. There is a riot, and in it much of the substance of the sketches Tod has been doing for "The Burning of Los Angeles" comes to life. But in John Schlesinger's new film adaptation of West's novel, Tod has been deprived of his role as Jeremiah. Though following the novel closely in other regards, Schlesinger and scriptwriter Waldo Salt have eliminated "The Burning of Los Angeles" from West's story and turned Tod's sketches for it into preparation for a routine movie assignment, a costume epic about Waterloo, Tod is doing for the studio.

All this might be to the good, too, except that Schlesinger has denied Tod the role of Jeremiah only in order to reserve it for himself. It is as an essay on southern California, much more than as a novel, that West's book deserves to be remembered. West's dense descriptions of his characters turn them not into people, but rather into clever generalizations about people. As a consequence, like the oversized hands of a character in the novel named Homer (Donald Sutherland), all West's characters are fascinating in repose but awkward in action. And no action in the book seems so clumsy or ill-conceived as the ending, when West attempted to palm off Tod's sketches as a real apocalypse for Tod, Homer and the girl they have been competing for, Faye Greener (Karen Black), that "tin-pan alley tune" Tod can't "get out of his head."

Unfortunately, having done away with "The Burning of Los Angeles," Schlesinger still permits Tod's sketches to be realized in the most literal way by a riot at the film's end. Having been transformed first, as work for the Waterloo film, into a vision of the past, those sketches become a peculiar sort of analogue for Schlesinger's own film. For Schlesinger is also, we feel, looking at the past in the hopes of telling us something about the near future. All he really accomplishes is to remind us that the latest news of California's imminent spiritual and physical destruction is at least forty years old. His expensive prophecy is just a version of *Earthquake* for intellectuals, or even worse, a retroactive *Rollerball*.

COLIN L. WESTERBECK, JR.

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BOB CORDING

WATER-WALKER

Note: *The title is taken from the nickname of the purple gallinule, a common Southern marsh bird.*

It has the color of sky after storm
or clean ocean under bright sun.
From rank lily to lily, it walks
lightly over languorous water,
nodding and bowing like a dove
past the coiled muscles of cottonmouth
and the thick flesh of alligator.

Preserved like some believing Christian
in a story, it rises firmly on water;
sifts through mud unstained; does not
turn back nor go down; disregards
even me, its witness,
who for a time is extended
something to uphold.

● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●

JOSEPHINE JACOBSEN

A TRAVELER TOLD ME

A traveler told me of a tribe in Bali
who honor in a festival, petal,
poem, carved wood, and paint,

and, with the wreath perfect, and the feathers,
the colors spoken out,
with the poem, and wood, done,

let these go where others
in a like ceremony
on this day have gone:

burn them. Give fire
what cannot be kept
or lost. Burn wood, words, colors:

purifying the shifty desire
to keep a comment
on the lips of hoarders.

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AFTER BALTIMORE, WHAT?

RALPH A. KEIFER

An American Catholic Catechism
GEORGE J. DYER *et al.*, Ed.
Seabury, $10.

The Catholic Catechism
JOHN A. HARDON, S.J.
Doubleday, $9.95

The Common Catechism
JOHANNES FEINER
& LUKAS VISCHER, Ed.
Seabury, $10.95

THE appearance of three catechisms for adults this year is an event of some significance. It reflects a general desire to provide a positive presentation of Catholic/Christian teaching in a coherent way. Yet it is clear that the clock is not being turned back. The very range of these books, from the ecumenical *The Common Catechism* to the conservative and ostensibly "official" approach of *The Catholic Catechism* is itself a manifestation of the pluralism that is now a fact of Catholic life. All three books manifest a concern to summarize the more significant changes that have taken place since Vatican II.

The Common Catechism is probably the most successful of the three. It summarizes both Protestant and Catholic viewpoints, including points of ecumenical convergence as well as matters of dispute among and within the churches. Its format and style of presentation clearly reflect the impact of contemporary biblical, historical and theological investigations in an engaging way, and there is a deep awareness of problems of unbelief in the modern world. It is a real handbook for those who are not specialists in theology.

Its major deficiency, if it can be called such, is its German origin. Because of this, specifically American issues receive little attention. Inevitably, because of a different ecumenical situation from our own, the Protestant side is given a distinctively Evangelical (i.e., German Lutheran) tone. But there are occasional generous nods to the Calvinist tradition and some appreciation of the unique situation of the Anglican communion as a church containing both Protestant and Catholic elements. This is not to say that *An American Catholic Catechism* is much more oriented to the American scene. The ambiguous American civic religion and American problems of racial prejudice are not even mentioned. And one would think from reading *An American Catholic Catechism* that mixed marriages were a non-problem in this country.

Both American efforts, *An American Catholic Catechism* and *The Catholic Catechism* fare rather badly when compared with *The Common Catechism*. *The Catholic Catechism* aims to summarize and synthesize the official teaching of the Catholic Church. It describes its goal as providing a "concise source book on the principal teachings of the Catholic Church." In some ways, the result is useful. There are summations of official Catholic teaching on just about every major issue, past as well as present. The difficulty is that reliance on official teaching requires that some gaps be filled and that the author compensate for excess of official attention to some minor issues. *The Catholic Catechism* does not succeed very well at this. Its ten pages on indulgences (as compared to five on baptism) may reflect the proportion of official concern during the past four hundred years or so. But it does not provide much toward a perspective on core Catholic teaching.

An even more serious difficulty is that *The Catholic Catechism* requires sufficient theological education to distinguish official teaching from the author's own assumptions and emphases. *The Catholic Catechism*'s basic assumption is that the language, style, philosophical framework and categories of the preconciliar theology manuals are normative structures for the presentation of Catholic teaching. And so there is more about such things as infused virtues, or dulia, hyperdulia and latria than the average Catholic, even the average educated Catholic, might care to know. The author is also extremely fond of a style of biblical interpretation that was beginning to be unacceptable thirty years ago. But *The Catholic Catechism* should prove no threat to those who are concerned to promote a different approach to the Catholic faith. Its vigorous stand on social issues will probably distress American Catholic conservatives who are inclined to fudge on this area of Catholic teaching. Also, the preponderance of lines like the following is apt to deter popularity: "When we speak of Christ's mediation and of Mary's subordinate co-operation with him, we are talking abstractly about what the redemption means concretely."

An American Catholic Catechism gives the general impression of new wine in some very old skins. Its basic approach is to summarize both official teaching and respectable contemporary developments, leaving room for a certain pluralism and even some ambiguity. But the presentation of material leaves much to be desired. For example, there is a separate section on Mary, in spite of the lead of Vatican II, which urged that Mariology be integrated with Christology and ecclesiology.

RALPH A. KEIFER, *a frequent contributor to* Worship, *is an associate professor of liturgy at St. Mary's Seminary and University in Baltimore.*

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Perhaps an even more useful example of the failure in format and presentation is the treatment of original sin. It appears in the section on creation. In spite of its denials, *An American Catholic Catechism* communicates the impression that the Christian doctrine of original sin is based primarily on the first chapters of Genesis. On the other hand, in *The Common Catechism* the question of original sin is placed in the section on redemption, after a full chapter titled "The New Creation," and is taken up specifically only after a full discussion of personal sin. *The Common Catechism* carefully separates the question of the individuality of Adam from the broader issue of original sin —something that *An American Catholic Catechism* fails to do.

The result is a speculative muddle in *An American Catholic Catechism*. In fairness, it must be observed that in most places this work handles areas of dispute with honesty and clarity, with a fair presentation of varied positions and without attempting to create false harmonies. But its treatment of original sin is an artificial harmonization of contemporary and traditional views. While *An American Catholic Catechism* denies the necessity of an individual Adam at the beginning of the human race, it insists that original sin must be understood as a single primal fault. Appealing to St. Paul, it does not entertain any possibility that there was not an historic situation of original justice and holiness and an historic fall. And it creates a new myth to explain the matter. "Mankind could gradually have evolved to a point where it was capable of free choice. . . . The invitation was given to and the decision made by one man who acted for the race." In the course of a paragraph, the verbs change from *could* to *did*. One has the impression that the teaching of Trent has been upheld in a very cautious manner. One also wonders whether contemporary biblical scholarship and plain honesty have been respected as well.

The treatment of the church is especially distressing. Oddly, it is considered before God. Questions of authority in the church are given equal space with the rest of the treatment of the church, perpetuating the impression that the Catholic understanding of the church is primarily institutional and hierarchical. In contrast, *The Common Catechism* helpfully separates the narrower issue of authority from the rest of its treatment of the church by some three hundred pages.

The Common Catechism carefully integrates the findings of biblical studies and ecumenical theological convergence into its format and presentation. *An American Catholic Catechism* acknowledges and often explains such developments, but does not allow them to influence its style. A useful case in point is the question of morality. In *The Common Catechism,* Christian morality is presented as a response in faith, as part of life before God. While *An American Catholic Catechism* shares the same perspective, it uses the ten commandments as a format for dealing with specific moral questions. The result of the use of this conventional framework is serious imbalance. Social justice is tacked on as a kind of afterthought to the ten commandments. In the worst of American catechetical conventionality, the question of the morality of the arms race gets one *line* in passing, while masturbation gets two-thirds of a page. Considering our gargantuan defense budget, it should have occurred to *An American Catechism* that American Catholics probably spend more time earning tax money for the arms race than they do masturbating.

An American Catholic Catechism also has some very serious omissions. With the current interest in prayer and spirituality, an extensive treatment of the subject might have been expected. Prayer gets all of seven lines under some questions about God's activity in the world. The section under the first commandment discusses everything from vows to superstition, but manages to avoid a positive treatment of Catholic prayer life. The prayer dimension of sacramental celebration is barely mentioned, and there is no positive treatment of prayer forms, traditional or otherwise. By way of contrast, prayer is mentioned seventeen times in *The Common Catechism* and one of those entries is twenty-one pages long.

An interesting American touch in *An American Catholic Catechism* is a question on the pentecostal or charismatic "baptism in the Holy Spirit." The question is answered positively and sympathetically. But in view of the presence of this movement in American Catholicism, *An American Catholic Catechism*'s lack of a serious discussion of the Holy Spirit is a deplorable omission. The fullest treatment on the Holy Spirit—and that is not much—is in the section on morality. The relation of the Spirit to the church is not mentioned, and there is nothing on the Spirit in the sections on grace and eschatology. The question of charisms escapes notice. It might have been expected that some effort would have been made to provide substantial guidance in this critical area.

Unlike *The Common Catechism, An American Catholic Catechism* makes little attempt to show the ecumenical convergence of thinking on sacraments. For instance, *The Common Catechism* mediates the classic two or seven sacraments argument by pointing out that there is a broader view of sacrament influencing the Catholic definition, and by highlighting the common understanding of baptism and eucharist as "special" among the sacraments. *An American Catholic Catechism*'s treatment of baptism and confirmation is especially weak. Contrary to new Roman documents (beginning with the rite for the baptism of children), infant baptism is given the lion's share of attention. Catholic dissent from the common American view of confirmation as a sacrament of witness or maturity is not mentioned. The overwhelming amount of New Testament material associating the gift of the Spirit with baptism is virtually passed over. As for questioning infant baptism, the impression is given that all the difficulties are in Europe.

An American Catholic Catechism also has a love of jargon. *The Com-*

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mon Catechism occasionally lapses into pulpitese like "backsliding," but the lapses are rare enough to be pardonable. *An American Catholic Catechism* frequently uses latinate technical argot, e.g., "parvity of matter" and "artificial insemination *in vitro*." Echoing the good old days when things we didn't approve of were rash, scandalous and offensive to pious ears, it describes the notion of sperm banks from anonymous donors as "repugnant." Wouldn't "morally wrong" do? There is also a certain amount of coinage of new obfuscations. Not entirely satisfied with the official description of Christ's eucharistic presence as "substantial," *An American Catholic Catechism* describes it as "somatic." Which is only a fancy way of begging the question. Somatic, one assumes, means Christ's bodily presence. But the problem is, what does "This is my body" *mean?* To say that it means that Christ is somatically present literally puts the question in Greek. The cumulative effect of such precious language is to give the book an unnecessarily technical and undesirably clerical flavor.

Overall, *An American Catholic Catechism* gives the appearance of being a compendium of materials for answering questions which are apt to be raised by rather conservative churchgoers. While it comes up with many new answers, its frame of reference is the theology and thought patterns of fifteen or twenty years ago. Its aim seems to be to introduce conservative churchgoers to new currents of thought and to do it in gentle steps. If so, it does answer a general need, and may be particularly useful to people who are involved in adult education. Given that rather limited aim, it is a useful book. But *The Common Catechism* is apt to be far more helpful to those who are unfamiliar or uncomfortable with preconciliar Catholic thought patterns and perspectives. Parish religious education is so busy responding to the vocal right that the needs of the not-so-conservative are often overlooked. They will welcome a coherent, fresh, and intelligent account of the Christian faith.

The Common Catechism may also prove to be some help if and when the younger generation returns to church. They will be a generation in search of a tradition and innocent of the old frames of reference. *The Common Catechism* requires only intelligence and literacy to be read and appreciated. The book is unabashedly scholarly and will not have instant or popular appeal. But it will be an extremely worthwhile handbook for a genuinely adult religious education.

BOOKS

AN ARTFUL AMALGAM OF THE ABSURD

QUINCY HOWE

Meeting at Potsdam

CHARLES L. MEE, JR.

Evans, $10.95

Albert Camus created a literature of the absurd. Samuel Beckett invented the theater of the absurd. Jean-Paul Sartre originated a philosophy of the absurd. And now comes Charles L. Mee, Jr. with a mini-history of the absurd covering those two and a half weeks between July 15 and August 1, 1945 when Truman, Stalin, and Churchill tried at Potsdam to define, explore, and co-ordinate their policies toward one another and toward the surrounding world. On July 25 Churchill left Potsdam for London, never to return, because it had taken until then for the complete returns from the spring general election to show that Britain's voters had replaced Churchill with Attlee as Prime Minister.

Meanwhile at Potsdam the restrictions of time, space, and personnel under which the original Big Three met and labored led to their firm and unanimous agreement to disagree. As a starter, Stalin refused to withdraw the Red Army from any of the European territories that it still occupied. Truman followed through by insisting on the indefinite postponement of a general peace conference. Churchill refused to turn over to Stalin one-third of the ships of the German Navy then in British waters. On July 24, the day before Churchill left Potsdam for London, Truman received official word of the successful atomic bomb test at Alamogordo. This meant—among other things—that Stalin could no more participate in the occupation of Japan than Truman could participate in the administration of eastern Europe.

Today—thirty years after these happenings—thirty-six-year-old Charles L. Mee, Jr., Harvard graduate and former editor of *Horizon* Magazine, has reconstructed them into an engrossing story that tells itself with its blend of brief quotations from the Potsdam transcripts and bits and pieces from innumerable accounts by participants and witnesses, all of it held together with his own terse summations and commentaries. Indeed, it is this artful amalgam that evokes in the reader—at any rate in this reader—that eerie sense of the absurd which infuses so much contemporary history.

Unlike some accounts of Potsdam, this one gives proper credit to Joseph E. Davies, Roosevelt's second pre-war Ambassador to Moscow, who sat close

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to Truman throughout the conference but whose voluminous note-taking goes unmentioned. Unlike the peripatetic and irresolute Stimson, Davies remained before, during, and after Potsdam an unreconstructed Wilson Democrat as opposed to the cold war as Walter Lippmann had always been—a circumstance made all the more noteworthy by the similarity the views of Joseph Davies at Potsdam bore to the views of Charles Mee today.

As *Meeting at Potsdam* now tells the story, Secretary of State Byrnes broke the deadlocks at the summit by persuading the Big Three to refer most of their unfinished business to the Council of Foreign Ministers, where Molotov—ever obedient to Stalin's orders—gladly exercised his usual vetoes. Although the vigilant Eden had seen through Stalin's game from the start, the groggy Churchill had not. In Charles Mee's book, Churchill embodied the tottering British Empire over whose liquidation he still hoped not to have to preside. But only by sowing dissension between Truman and Stalin did Churchill see any hope of shoring up that Empire—and perky Harry Truman had not come to Potsdam to play any such games as that. The man from Missouri had to be shown—shown, that is, hard evidence to show the folks back home that America had indeed won the war and the fruits that went with such a victory. It was to the fast-talking, fast-thinking, Jimmy Byrnes not to the rumbling, rambling Churchill that Truman gave heed and Byrnes came to the rescue by selling good old "Uncle Joe" the Council of Foreign Ministers. But even before the Potsdam Conference broke up on August 1, both Truman and Churchill found themselves having to do business with Stalin on Stalin's terms.

So what? During their first ten days of bickering at Potsdam the Big Three had gone from absurdity to absurdity which now speak for themselves in Charles Mee's book. The news of the atomic breakthrough not only capped these absurdities. It blasted Potsdam—and not Potsdam only—into a new age. That, too, Mr. Mee permits to speak for itself. Only when Truman decides, two weeks later, to drop the bomb on Japan does he raise his own voice, as he does again in his Epilogue chapter when Churchill declared his cold war on the Soviet Union, speaking at Fulton, Missouri, on March 5, 1946. The point has nothing to do with Truman or Churchill, with the atom bomb or the cold war. It has to do with the historiography of *Meeting at Potsdam*, almost all of which remains within its original bounds of letting the facts speak for themselves—chiefly in the words and deeds of the principals at Potsdam, during the course of their meeting there.

To accept the absurd is not to condone or to condemn it. "Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord." In *Meeting at Potsdam* Charles Mee has made a journalistic and historical breakthrough in that he has chosen a memorable incident in 20th century history to demonstrate that the absurdities of our time have now reached such a pitch that the journalist's task has become to present the record in such a way that it speaks for itself. In connection with the Second World War, no condemnation of Hitler or Stalin can surpass their own records; their fates were self-made. It has been the same—in principle if not in detail—with the wretched Nixon. The current wind-up of the Vietnam war may yet witness his successors meeting similar fates.

A generation ago, when John Gunther was the same age as Charles Mee is today, his *Inside Europe* started him on his journalistic career of introducing his compatriots to an extraordinary galaxy of world leaders and to the unprecedented challenges that all of them met and some of them mastered. Since then, more and more complex challenges confront fewer and fewer leaders capable even of meeting, to say nothing of mastering them. The exuberant John Gunther was a journalist born at the right season for his questing temperament. The imperturbable Charles Mee is a journalist born at the right time to cope with this season of the absurd.

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REVIEWERS

QUINCY HOWE, Contributing Editor of *Atlas World Press Review*, is the author of *Ashes of Victory: World War II and Its Aftermath* (Simon and Schuster).

GERALD WEALES, a *Commonweal* drama critic and professor of drama at the University of Pennsylvania, is the author of *Clifford Odets* (Bobbs-Merrill).

WAYNE ANDREWS is Archives of American Art Professor at Wayne State University. His most recent book is *American Gothic* (Random House).

Pictures and Conversations

ELIZABETH BOWEN
Knopf, $7.95

GERALD WEALES

There is always something fascinating about posthumous volumes of unfinished, previously uncollected, hesitantly reprinted work by major writers. The appeal, however, is to one's curiosity not to any more exalted aesthetic impulse. Reading such a book is a little like sorting through the drawers and closets of a dead friend, expecting neither treasures nor resurrection, but mementos, curios. I approached *Pictures and Conversations* in such a spirit, as though its subtitle were "The Literary Leavings of Elizabeth Bowen," and I discovered two books—one disturbing, one rewarding—much richer than a gathering of fragments would suggest.

"The day this book was begun I went for a walk." This is the first sentence of "Origins," which was to be the first chapter of an altogether different *Pictures and Conversations*, a book that was "*not* to be an autobiography," but a presentation of "recalls" that embodied the relationship "between living and writing." Bowen's walk took her along a road she had known sixty years before and slowly—more slowly than usual with a Bowen book—I found myself drawn into a chapter that was at once an evocation and an essay in aesthetics, found myself comfortable with a creation shared by the aging novelist and another of her selves, the Anglo-Irish child in an unfamiliar Kent. My initial reluctance to be drawn in stemmed, I suppose, from the word "autobiography" on the book jacket, the expectation—despite Spencer Curtis

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Brown's foreword—that here was another factual fiction, another reminiscence. By the time I reached the third chapter, chronology could not have mattered less. The human impulse to give the shape of fiction to life, to see reality through the expectations of the novel, was mixed with the novelist's desire to bring "the sobriety of history" back to her past, to penetrate both her memory and the fictional uses she had made of the people, places and things of her life. The book had begun to impose itself on me, and then, a few pages into the third chapter, an abrupt halt and the editor's "Here the ms. breaks off." I was not prepared. For all that I had come to the book to read a fragment, I did not want to let Elizabeth Bowen go in mid-thought if not in mid-sentence. There was not even comfort in the notes of intention —quoted at the beginning of this paragraph—which Brown appends to the selection. Facts, events, circumstances, these could be accurately recorded, Bowen says shortly before the manuscript stops, people are another matter: "Gone, they remain—elusive as ever."

The rewarding book within this disturbing one is an account of how fiction is made, both generally and specifically by Elizabeth Bowen. When one understands the main thrust of *Pictures and Conversations* one can see why Brown chose to reprint "The Art of Bergotte," Bowen's essay on Proust's use of his fictional novelist, and "Notes on Writing a Novel" with what remains of the non-autobiography. Even Brown's own foreword, which at first seems almost haphazard ("the uninstructed thoughts of a friend"), touching first one Bowen base, then another, comes to have its own thematic relevance. *Pictures and Conversations* is an important book for anyone who wants to read Bowen's work seriously.

The other two items are less central to the concerns of the volume as a whole. "The Move-in," the opening chapter of a novel on which Bowen was working when she died, is immediately appealing, an arresting situation firmly set in a concrete landscape, peopled with characters who are already beginning to take shape. It is a novel I would have liked to read, but I am not affected by it as I am by the other fragmentary work; the novel is simply unfinished; the autobiography is incomplete.

The Nativity play, which Bowen wrote at the request of Limerick Cathedral, is uncharacteristic Bowen, relatively conventional Nativity. It is unusual only in its first act, in which the Three Kings "have come to a standstill," waiting for an event that will take them beyond the point where learning and magic have brought them, and in one image in the second, the scattered anemones which Joseph sees as "spilled blood," the promise of Easter in Christmas. For the rest—much of it in the words of Luke (King James Version)—the play is adoration rather than art, sentimentally so when the children are brought in to close the play. No Charles Williams, Bowen could not see the Nativity anew. I prefer her when she is seeing Kent anew, by seeing herself seeing it sixty years earlier.

American Art of the Twentieth Century

SAM HUNTER and JOHN JACOBUS

Abrams, $20

WAYNE ANDREWS

Although Sam Hunter and John Jacobus never get around to telling us what they hoped to accomplish in their survey of twentieth century American art and architecture, it seems fairly obvious that both authors have decided that American art must be *American*. The search for "viable native idioms" —to use their own words—is a cause to which they are devoted: this leads Mr. Hunter to pass what may seem like an odd judgment on Sargent and Whistler, who are relegated, having spent too much time abroad, to the refuse heap of the nineteenth century. They are, we are informed, "unvital, aristocratic, European in the fashionable sense." Isn't this slightly unfair? For Sargent was, so some people think, the most expert portrait painter

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of his age, with a singular talent for evoking the expectations of a transatlantic crossing in the days of the *Titanic*. But Sargent could do more than imagine ladies with ocean-liner eyes. In his portrait of the Boit children he had the wit to suggest that four walls might form an infinite space. As for Whistler, he did appeal to Charles Baudelaire and Stéphane Mallarmé, two poets who may be remembered long after all of us are forgotten.

This reviewer, who can't get over the idea that American art is somehow part of the art of the western world, isn't exactly the man to appreciate the chauvinism that marks so many pages of this encyclopedia with its 988 illustrations, 195 of them in *full* color. Be that as it may, it is disappointing to find that neither Mr. Hunter nor Mr. Jacobus seems to have taken the trouble to *see America first*. There is nowhere any hint of the infinite variety of the American landscape: one area is just like any other to our authors, who can't seem to distinguish the difference between Omaha, Nebraska and Prides Crossing, Massachusetts. Is California merely "a land of contrasts," as Mr. Jacobus will have us believe? This is a platitude, if Mr. Jacobus will forgive me, the kind of thing an overworked writer may be guilty of after a long stretch at the typewriter. It should have been deleted by the editors. Assuming, of course, that the editors were on the job.

Our authors are far from satisfactory when it comes to describing the milieu in which our artists and architects have grown up. Nor has any effort been taken to suggest all the changes in American society from Theodore Roosevelt to Gerald Ford. The impact, for example, of the WPA and the other art projects of the New Deal is dismissed as simply "a new kind of search among American artists for their cultural identity." And if you happen to believe that booms and depressions play as a great role in artistic history as in our own daily lives, you will wonder why our authors have nothing to say about patronage, or next to nothing. A good patron may come in handy when the going gets rough.

Apparently neither Mr. Hunter nor Mr. Jacobus has ever glanced at a page of John Maynard Keynes. This is too bad, for economists do have their influence and we are still living with the results of the amusing attack on saving that Keynes launched while studying the consequences of the Versailles Treaty. "Saving," he made plain, "was for old age or for your children; but this was only in theory—the virtue of the cake was that it was never to be consumed, neither by you nor by your children after you." Who knows, but for Keynes we might never have witnessed the art collections formed in our time by so many corporations, including that of the Chase Manhattan Bank. Mr. Hunter doesn't tell us anything about the dinner, catered by Schrafft's, to which David Rockefeller invited many of the artists in the Chase Collection.

Yet the sudden—and deserved—affluence of the Abstract Expressionists, many of whom were Chase-owned, is part of the story of American art in our time. Equally part of the story is the neglect in the 1920s of artists of the rank of Marin, Dove, Demuth and O'Keeffe all of whom might have starved but for their champion the dealer Alfred Stieglitz. Mr. Hunter does have something to say about Stieglitz, but nothing whatever about Stieglitz's times: we are never told that in that era the wives of prosperous attorneys were content to gaze from their wicker chairs at the madonnas of George DeForest Brush.

And if yesterday is just like today, one artist (or architect) is pretty much like the last. In fact, *American Art of the 20th Century* rather resembles attending a gigantic cocktail party where the host is too important to introduce any of his guests. When we come to Walter Gropius, for example, there is not a word said about his aims at the Bauhaus nor about his conviction that "architecture is teamwork." So we are quite unprepared for the teamwork that produced the Pan-Am Building. For that matter, a biographical note about Andy Warhol and his mother might have been helpful, but Warhol, like nearly every artist in this book, springs, it seems, out of nowhere.

Warhol is, however, allowed to speak for himself. "Somebody said that Brecht wanted everybody to think alike," he is quoted. "I want everybody to think alike. But Brecht wanted to do it through Communism, in a way. Russia is doing it under government. It's happening here all by itself without being under a strict government, so if it's working without trying, why can't it work without being Communist? Everybody looks alike and acts alike, and we're getting more and more that way." To which Ron Davis out on the West Coast says amen. "He speaks," we are told, "for many artists when he laments that a new Chevrolet is *more perfect* than most art made today."

Mr. Hunter must not be accused of poking fun at Warhol and Davis. Far from it. The former is a famous Pop artist, one of the group he hails as "genuine and powerful innovators." The latter is congratulated for having discovered "new sources of sensuous space." It is really hard to find any modern artist whom Mr. Hunter heartily dislikes, and although he does admit on one page to the "excruciating boredom of recent vanguard art forms," the perpetrators are not easily identified. There are those who feel sculptor Robert Morris is a dreadful bore, but here he is praised for his "ironic, alertly contemporary intelligence." Mr. Hunter is desperately loyal to the last word, no matter how dull the last word may be. So is Mr. Jacobus, who tries so hard to prove that Robert Venturi is not the insipid architect revealed in the illustrations.

Aside from its constant bias in favor of the last word, *American Art of the 20th Century* could be described as an encyclopedia compiled with no particular point of view in mind. It is a puzzling book, almost as puzzling as a history of modern American literature that would give equal emphasis to Djuna Barnes and Joyce Carol Oates.

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Yet it has a morbid fascination all its own. It tells much, perhaps too much, about what passes in some places for American civilization in 1975.

CORRESPONDENCE

(*Continued from page 259*)

centuries this rule [*regula fidei*] has in fact undergone frequent and even drastic alterations. Just to give one example: The doctrine of the unattainability of eternal life for pagans, Jews and heretics solemnly defined by the Council of Florence (1438-45) was completely annulled by Vatican II, which declared that salvation is open to all men everywhere."

If this example is used to show a shift whereby one infallible statement was substituted for by another, it is wrong. I do not believe that Vatican II had any definitions which were promulgated in the technical sense of infallible. And it is my impression that only *Laetentur caeli* of July 6, 1439, in the Council of Florence, was considered infallible. It is a relatively short document and it does not contain the material on salvation of those outside the church.

Even if the example is used to show a shift from one solemnly defined stance to another, the example limps. The example is taken from *Cantate Domino*, the *Decretum pro Jacobitis* which occurred late in the Council of Florence (D 714):

> Firmiter credit, profitetur et praedicate, 'nullos intra catholicam Ecclesiam non existentes, non solum paganos, sed nec Iudaeos autohaereticos atque schismaticos, aeternae vitae fieri posse participes . . .'

(and the statement gets worse—I should interject that I am not writing to defend this statement but to protest my faith that the Church will not fail in its essential mission, of which a limited definition of infallibility is a part). At any rate, the statement of Mr. Schalk's example is set into a very long document with a range of more or less important statements. And the paragraph does not contain the word "definimus'—we define—which is used in *Laetentur caeli*. One of the Bulls which came out of the Council of Florence and which was also lengthy took pains to recognize a range of material within the document (D 695, n.1). The statement is apparently simply a quotation from St. Fulgentius, *De fide, ad Petrum*, raised into a teaching pronouncement of the Council.

Finally, if the example were to be used to show an error in church teaching and a shift in church teaching, I could agree, but then only. The author of the article simplifies to the point of error by using journalistic theology and clouds the whole discussion of infallibility.

PAUL J. GODA, S.J.

Amnesty for Aliens

Brooklyn, N.Y.

To the Editors: The June 20 News and Views column indicated its support of amnesty for unauthorized aliens in the United States.

While I am grateful for your positive position, may I correct for the record what seems to be an error in the historical evolution of the amnesty policy of the Church. Mr. Deedy stated in his column: "Maybe this concern for the illegal aliens would have cropped up without the stimulus of the Vietnamese influx. But it is doubtful."

The sudden influx of Vietnamese refugees was in no one's imagination before April 1975. I can assure you that in no way was the Vietnamese refugee problem the stimulus for the promotion of amnesty for unauthorized aliens. Let the record speak for itself.

On March 11, 1972, Father Tomasi of the Center for Migration Studies, Monsignor Murnion of the Archdiocese of New York, and I, as Director of the Migration Office of the Diocese of Brooklyn, testified before the House Subcommittee on Immigration and Naturalization. It was in that testimony that the Brooklyn Migration Office, with the full support of Bishop Mugavero, first proposed amnesty for unauthorized aliens.

After then and continuing through 1973 and 1974, press conferences and frequent meetings were held by religious leaders of the Northeast dioceses promoting the concept of unconditional amnesty. In May 1974, the Bishops of New York State took a strong stand against the Knorr-Field "Illegal Alien Bill" passed by the New York Legislature and which would have created great suffering among un-

GRADUATE COURSES IN THEOLOGY, Loyola University of Chicago. Fall Session 1975-76 (Sept. 23-Jan. 23). *The Psalms*, Rev. Brendan McGrath, OSB; *The History and Development of the Concept of Tradition*, Rev. John J. Ryan; *Contemporary Theology: An Ongoing Quest*, Sr. Mary Peter McGinty, CSJ; *The Church in Contemporary Theology*, Rev. Earl A. Weis, SJ; *The Gospel of Mark: Its Place in the Gospel Tradition*, Rev. John J. Kilgallen, SJ. Write Sr. Mary Peter McGinty, CSJ, LOYOLA UNIVERSITY, 6525 N. Sheridan Road, Chicago, Illinois 60626.

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authorized aliens in the State. It was then vetoed by then Governor Malcolm E. Wilson.

On February 11 and 12, 1975, approximately 30 Catholic religious leaders from various parts of the country met in Washington. As a result of the input and agreement of this meeting, the United States Catholic Conference developed a position statement on amnesty. This statement was presented to a hearing of the Subcommittee on Immigration, Citizenship and International Law on March 13, 1975 by Monsignor George G. Higgins. The following day, March 14, 1975, after several months of planning, a symposium on the question of unauthorized aliens was held at the Center for Migration Studies. In this symposium, 150 priests, religious and lay leaders of Northeast Dioceses endorsed unconditional amnesty and proposed a program on how to assist the unauthorized aliens.

The above represents a brief schema of constant activity on the part of many leaders in the Church for the past three years on behalf of amnesty for unauthorized aliens. While I am mainly acquainted with the activities of leaders in the Northeast dioceses, I am sure equally effective action on behalf of amnesty has taken place in other affected regions of the country. The important thing is that all of this activity took place before April 1975 and before there were any Vietnamese refugees.

We welcome the refugees from South Vietnam. At the same time, we will continue our Christian concern for the thousands of unauthorized aliens already here for, equally with the Vietnamese refugees, they are our brothers and sisters.

(REV.) ANTHONY J. BEVILACQUA
Brooklyn Diocesan Migration Office

Ed. Note: For more on this, see page 258.

Global Justice

YES, VIRGINIA, there is a class war, this one not within one society but between rich rations and poor ones. . . . What is needed is a more equitable world economic system, one that takes into account the harsh global facts of expanding population, poverty, food shortages and the scarcity of natural resources. World food stocks are now at their lowest level in 20 years. Given this situation, intensified class warfare between nations is inevitable unless justice is achieved for the developing countries, countries which include something like two out of every three persons in the world. . . .

People do not need to starve; there are steps we can take, other courses of action we can follow. The central fact we must remember is that the world's resources are limited, and the decisions on how they should be used are moral ones. Fortunately, there are signs of an increasing national awareness of our need for moral discussion of these issues, and there are heartening signs that the nation's churches and synagogues will join in emphasizing this need for ethical choices . . .

—Commonweal, July 12, 1974

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7-18-75

A "Catholic" Position?

Pearl River, N.Y.

To the Editors: Although Representative Drinan deals primarily with the multi-faceted Bartlett Amendment, he does stress the division among Catholic members of Congress on this abortion-related question and thereby concludes that there is no "Catholic position" regarding the issue of abortion and the law. ["Abortion on Medicaid?" May 9]. It seems to me that to base the definition of what is Catholic on the consensus of a group which happens to be made up of Church members is a risky business. It considers neither the fallibility of individual judgment nor motivation. By labelling a "Catholic position" any view subscribed to by a majority of Catholic legislators, we reduce Catholicism from a set of moral imperatives filled with social potentials to a political harlot. I would suggest that a "Catholic position" is one which reflects the values found in scripture and in the experience of the Judeo-Christian community. Father Drinan seems almost relieved that there is no "Catholic position." While I appreciate that a "Catholic position" has oft-

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times found itself unthinkingly imposed on a non-Catholic society, I suspect that a coherent moral approach to a social policy is more often an asset than a liability.

Clearly, up until now there has been no one constant Catholic position on either the question of abortion and the law or on abortion itself. However, with the data provided us by secular science and the application of Christian values, we might now develop, at least, a general "Catholic position" on abortion.

Biology informs us at what point indications of humanity appear in fetal life. We know that by the eighth week, all organs (including the cerebral cortex) are present in their rudimentary stages. We also know that brain activity, readable by EEG, is present at this early state. Further, we know that for months to come, the fetus is totally reliant upon its mother for life support. Now in light of the Christian concept of human rights, we ask ourselves if there exists an obligation to protect these seemingly human beings or if the dependency of these fetal creatures excuses us from the institution of any legal safeguards on their behalf. Are human rights determined on the basis of either viability or social liability? Should either be the case, we indeed owe the Supreme Court decision full support. But this is not the case, at least as far as the Christian concept of social justice is concerned. It is tough to say what a proper "Catholic position" might be, but it is safe to say that the viability-based approach that Father Drinan would let reign is definitely not it. The question of viability may be relevant to the ethics of Social Darwinism, but it seems alien to Christian Morality.

I am tired of blushing liberal Catholics willing to jeopardize human rights in order to avoid any appearance of theocracy. Thank God for those Catholics prepared to take a radical social stance without the blessing of the liberal establishment. If Representative Drinan feels compelled to display his opposition to the deadly Church-State Combo, I might suggest that he do something of less harmful nature such as foregoing his clerical collars, and borrowing some of John McLaughlin's business suits for Congressional weal.

KEVIN M. DOYLE

Birmingham, Mich.

To the Editors: Not once but twice, in his commentary on the recent Senate defeat of the Bartlett Amendment ["Abortions on Medicaid?" May 9], Congressman Drinan speaks approvingly of the reprehensible HEW argument that refusal to allow Medicaid payments for abortions would cost the American taxpayer between $450 and $560 million in one year alone "if those women . . . carried their pregnancies to term and received the usual medical care and welfare payments." In other words: better to abort the children of the poor than to give them the same, sometimes expensive, opportunities for a decent life which the rich already enjoy. The speed and zeal with which the senators acted to assure federally-funded abortions have been noticeably absent in their efforts to secure other constitutional rights for low-income women.

Father Drinan apparently sees no irony or ugly implications in court and legislative decisions which link Medicaid maternity care with abortion care, thus equating government-supported procedures which produce death with those which foster life. Or in adoption of the arrogant and questionable premise that the ethics and conduct of the rich must be emulated by the rest of the population.

During a debate a Yale on April 17, 1975, physicist William Shockley argued "that society should develop anti-dysgenic methods" and promoted his tenuous thesis that blacks possess a statistical I.Q. deficit based on genetically-inherited factors. Not surprisingly, he also spoke with approval of euthanasia and abortion and claimed that since the neurological capacity of a human fetus is similar to that of a "trout," aborting a fetus "can't be of more concern than catching a trout." But Professor Shockley needn't worry. The courts and budget obsessed, eugenically-minded legislators seem determined to cut welfare costs by encouraging the elimination of the offspring of those troublesome welfare recipients who stubbornly continue to procreate. Particularly impoverished blacks.

PATRICIA NIXON

Abigail McCarthy (Cont.)

man?" Because "the public attachment had a larger component of sheer celebration: of 'spiritual employment.' (Here he is using a phrase from a Schlesinger memo to Kennedy.) Such feeling, which we all shared, was the result of our defective political culture —"even the nation itself, let alone a particular political movement, should not pretend to provide the sources of value and the springs of cultural renewal; these should not give men and women the symbols of ultimate meaning and evoke their final loyalty. Such loyalty and meaning should come from the realms of freedom, truth and mystery that lie beyond the social ordering that is the task of politics."

There is much more that is clear, and simply put, but reflecting thoroughly digested hard thought:

"The democratic polity is not easy, but difficult. It rests upon a culture that is freely formed out of the values and ideas and interests of the persons who make up the society. It is not automatic. It does not arise out of mechanical historical forces. Its characteristics are the results of choice, which in turn are rooted in the values of the citizens, and in the sharing of those values in the culture. . . . It is a moral enterprise. . . . And this moral enterprise has an intellectual component. In a complicated arena of choice, one needs the intellectual work of interpretation. And that in turn requires that one generation pass on to the next its effort to understand how justice and the public good are served by the institutions of the society."

We have not always done it so badly. We can keep trying. We can earn our Fourths and do as we did this year—picnic, parade and break out the flags.

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